

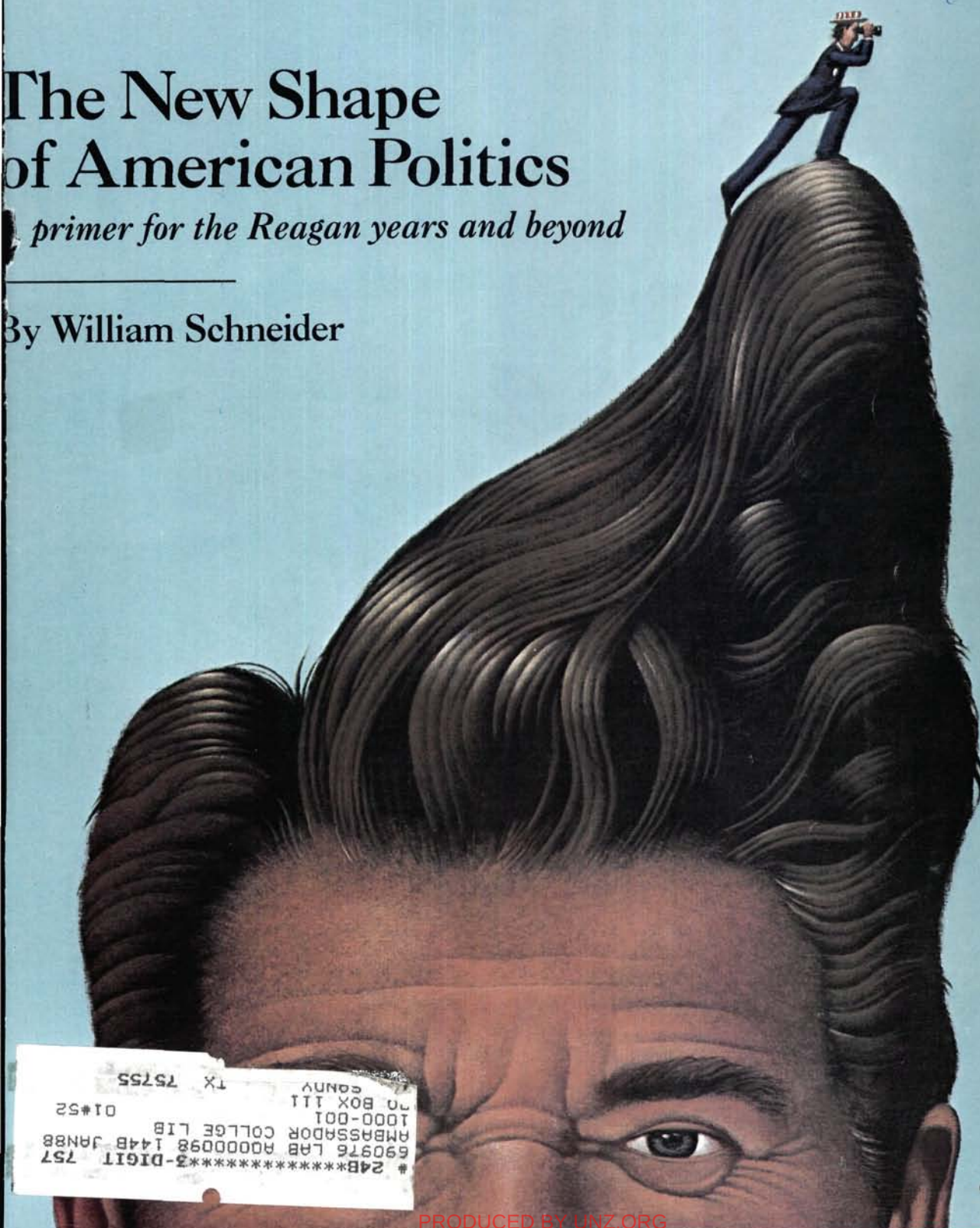
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J.K. GALBRAITH ON THE 1929 PARALLEL / JAMES FALLOWS ON JAPAN

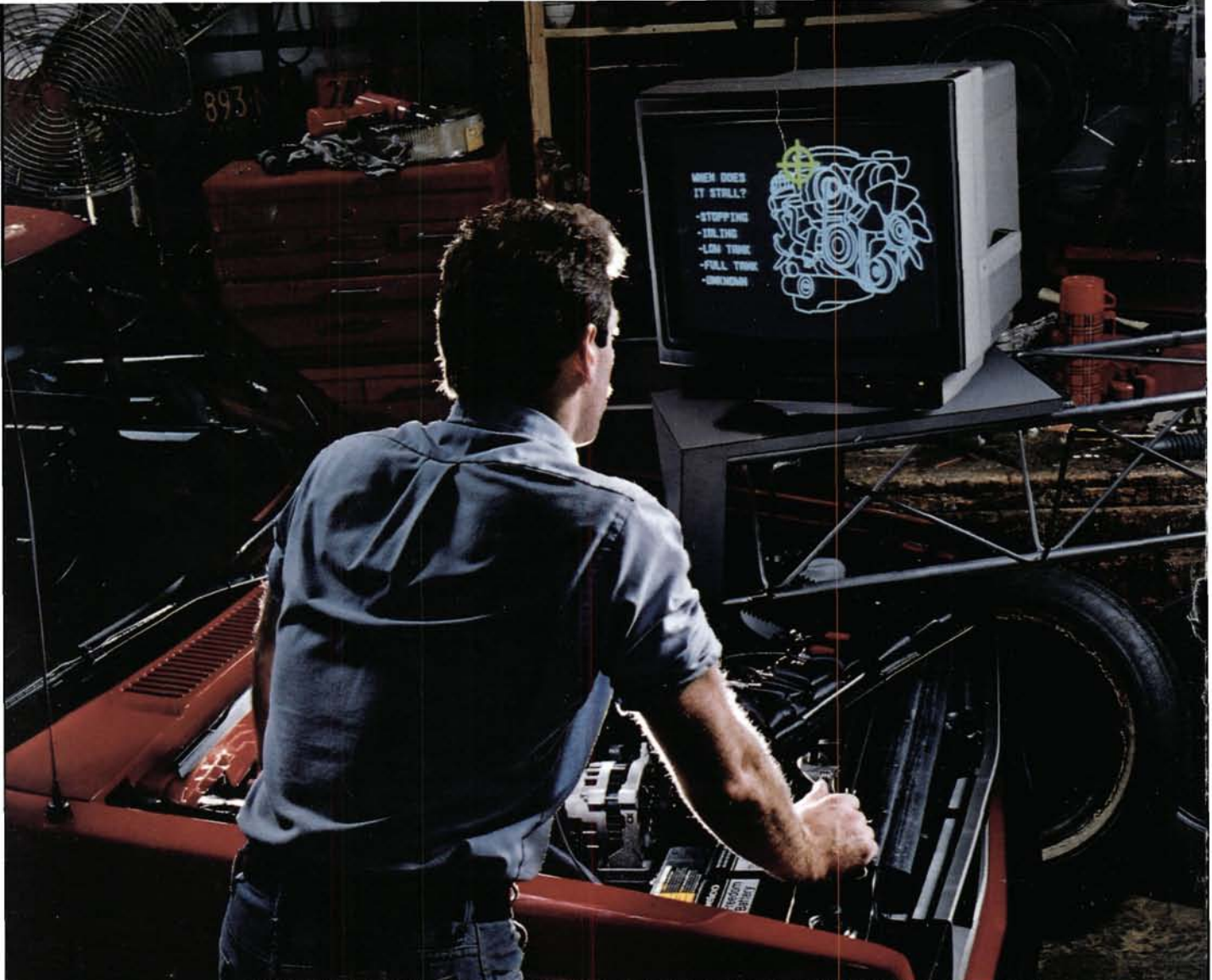
The New Shape of American Politics

a primer for the Reagan years and beyond

By William Schneider



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High Tech, High Trade

America's trade imbalance is becoming acute. There are no quick solutions. The trade gap can be closed only through patient, balanced efforts by industry and government.

American exporters must be more aggressive in penetrating foreign markets. More smaller companies should join major manufacturers in the export business. Big companies should redouble their efforts abroad.

U.S. industry has relied too heavily on the huge domestic market. Exports account for only nine percent of U.S. Gross National Product. This compares to 16 percent for Japan and 22 to 35 percent for Canada, France, Italy, Britain, and West Germany.

Government can spur exports by promoting free trade policies. We should work to dismantle existing trade barriers, rather than erecting new ones.

Protectionist measures by any name—trade quotas, tariffs, surcharges, or technology transfer restrictions—hinder economic growth. They undermine the complex network of financial and trading relationships linking America with the rest of the world.

The American government is pursuing discussions with the government of Japan aimed at widening access to Japanese markets. These negotiations will stimulate trade if they simplify regulations and ease restrictions inhibiting U.S. industrial and agricultural exports. While supporting these efforts, we should also encourage diligent enforcement of U.S.

laws against targeting, dumping, and other unfair trade practices in the domestic market.

We must also be alert to U.S. government policies that make it difficult for American companies to grow internationally. U.S. manufacturers are forming many joint ventures and other partnerships with foreign companies. These arrangements preserve jobs in America by enabling U.S. companies to penetrate foreign markets.

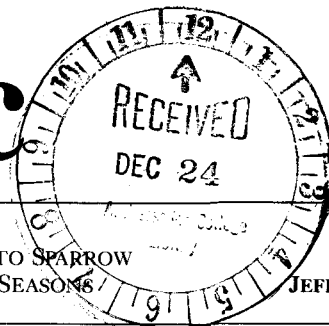
U.S. technology is vital to many of these agreements. Protectionist policies that restrict exports of technology discourage efforts to capitalize on global business opportunities.

National security considerations must always come first. But we must be certain that any technologies we withhold for exclusive American use are critical to our interests and are ours alone. It is folly to deny a friendly country technology it can get elsewhere. It makes no sense to padlock knowledge that's available from the free and open U.S. research complex.

Government policies must take into account these realities. Unnecessary restrictions on technology transfer undermine economic growth and weaken national defense. They undercut job creation. They damage relations with countries that share our economic and security interests.

Technology is the key that opens doors to foreign markets. Unrealistic restrictions on exporting and sharing technology handcuff American companies in their attempts to tap new markets abroad.





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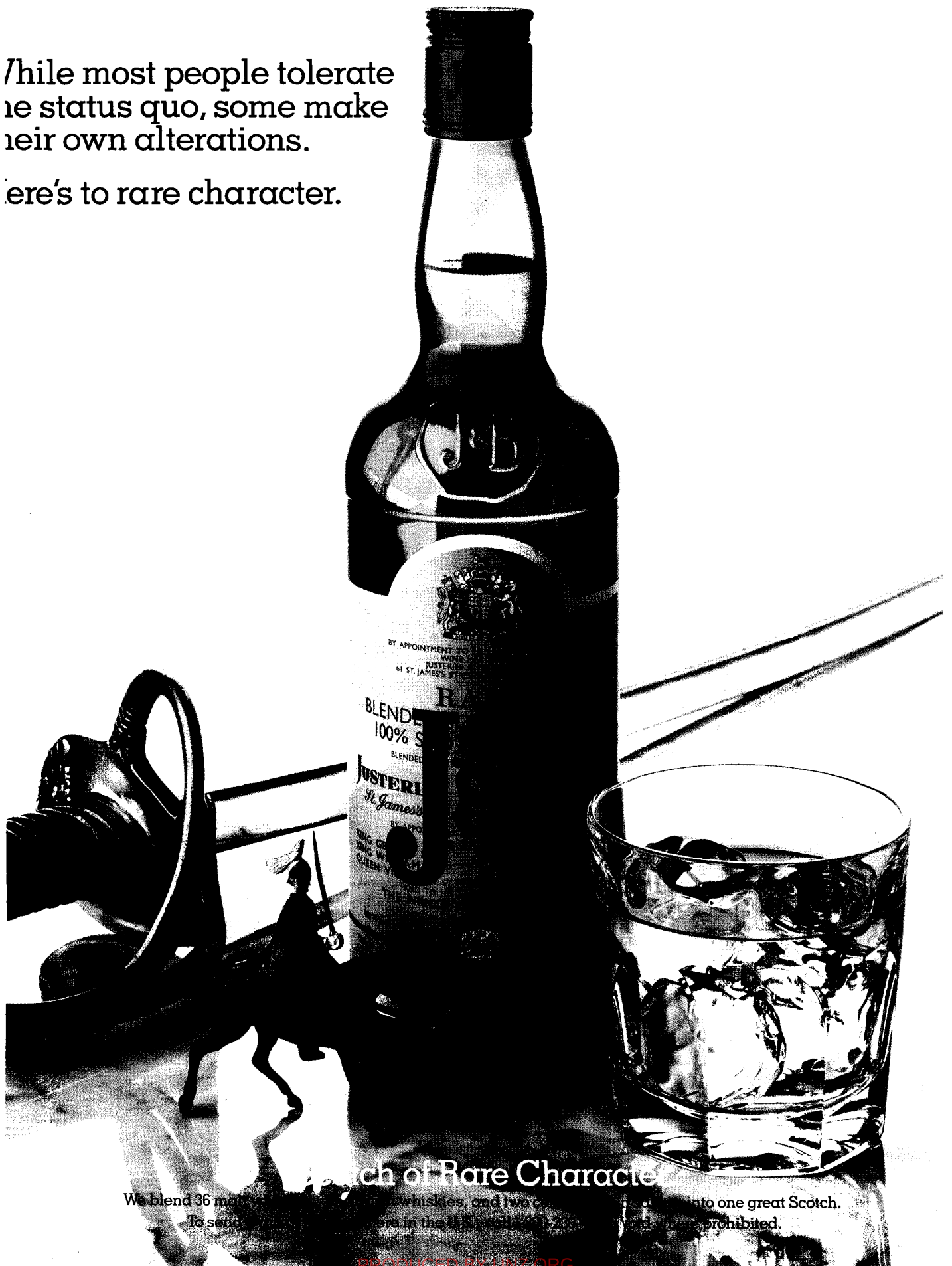
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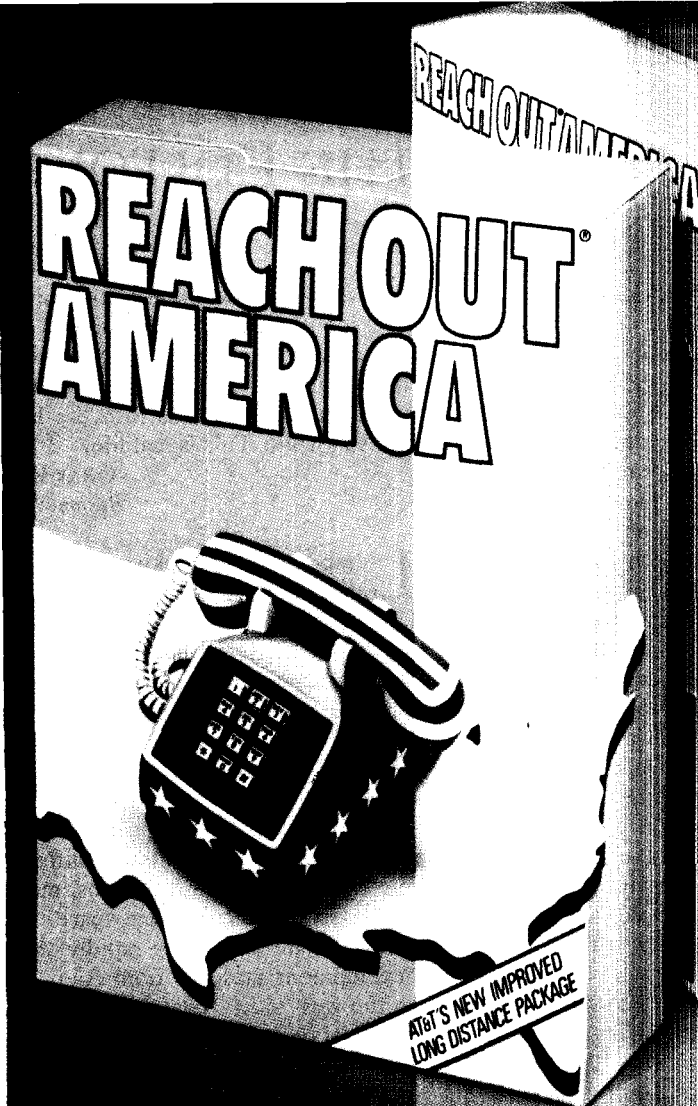
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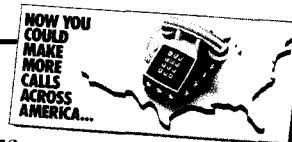
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RESHAPING AMERICA

Christopher Leinberger and Charles Lockwood, in "How Business Is Reshaping America" (October *Atlantic*), have accurately described a substantial change in the makeup of both urban and suburban America. However, the term "urban village," which they optimistically use to portray this new entity, is misleading.

These glorified industrial parks are in essence mini corporate complexes, without the heterogeneous populations and cultural qualities of real cities or villages. The layouts of these new, bland clusters prevent the mingling of people from varied backgrounds, and opportunities for socialization provided by the marketplace are lost. Indeed, the planners of these false environments do not appear to recognize the need for anything other than a business-oriented existence.

WILLIAM E. STUMPF
Minneapolis, Minn.

Leinberger and Lockwood's article on the growth of "urban villages" made my flesh crawl. Are we doomed to live out our private and bloodless lives in these spec-built, low-rise parking lots with office space, driving home to our half-acre chemlawns and tract houses? Are we destined to spend yet more hours of each day concentrating on the highway's white line? The article describes in a matter-of-fact way everything that is shortsighted and brutal about Americans' attitudes toward their landscape and their lives.

My objection is not to the reality of independent suburban centers but to the present form of those centers, caused by the total lack of governmental control and misguided zoning ordinances that were written to avoid the most unhealthy effects of overcrowding: dependence on automobiles, an absence of community, and uncontrolled waste of the landscape. Leinberger and Lockwood seem to think that this Reaganizing of the landscape is inevitable. That is a terrifying prospect. England and Europe have dealt with these problems by establishing clear town limits outside which any development beyond the needs of farmers is forbidden. The town

centers of England and Europe maintain their identity as focal points in real communities, where people can walk to the market and to school and can ride fast and comfortable trains into the large cities to work. This is real life.

GRAY REA
Boston, Mass.

Leinberger and Lockwood produce an excellent look at the changing face of America, but their omission of metropolitan Detroit struck me as odd since this area gave the country the machines that enabled the change to take place. And now Detroit itself resembles Los Angeles, as a textbook example of the change.

The city's development has not kept pace with that of its suburbs. Southfield, one of the first postwar suburbs, recently passed Detroit in office space. Tri and Novi are expanding rapidly. And development crescent from Ann Arbor on the west to Mt. Clemens on the east is served by a grid of freeways.

We call these areas urban hubs or rival downtowns, each with its own character and purpose, and they replace the "spoke" concept, in which bedroom communities radiate from the center city. Hub development has become the American pattern (Los Angeles, Phoenix), replacing the high-density European pattern (New York, Chicago, Philadelphia). The American pattern requires autos and freeways; the European pattern employs subways and buses. The decline of mass transit in some of our large cities might be traced directly to the grafting of this American pattern onto the European core. Detroit has visions—and in some quarters it still does—of the European pattern for the region, but it is producing the essential ingredient for the creation of these rival hubs.

LIONEL LINDE
*The Detroit News
Detroit, Mich.*

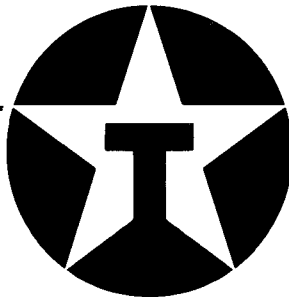
Don't lament the death of downtown, Leinberger and Lockwood say: it has been replaced, not by urban sprawl but by "urban villages." I had thought that Los Angeles, where people spend most of their time sitting in automobiles, had been given up on as the

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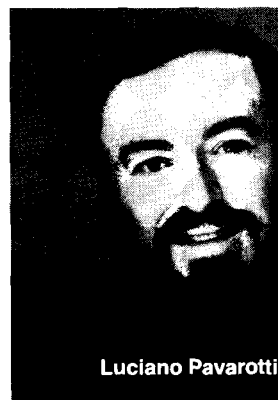
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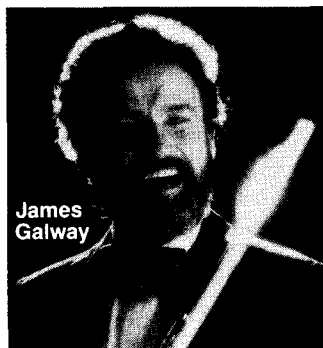
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model city of the future. Just where are the people who revel in low-density suburban housing, automobiles, and decentralized living? Just where is the entertainment in the urban villages? Is it the multicinema in a tissue-box building, surrounded by parking?

Businesses followed people to the suburbs, not—as the authors say—the other way around. People took flight from the inner cities trying to get away from crime and poor schools. Freeways were built to accommodate commuters from the suburbs to the inner city, but now that the inner city has collapsed, more people are commuting from one suburb to another than to the inner city; as a consequence, freeways are now being constructed between the suburbs, cutting the landscape even more into little islands.

The suburb or urban village has not in any way achieved the vitality the inner city once had. The streets of the urban villages are lifeless. From what I hear, they are called the place of the living dead.

RALPH SLOVENKO
Professor of Law and Psychiatry
Wayne State University
Detroit, Mich.

NEW ZEALAND

David Harlan demonstrates little insight into New Zealand politics and culture in his article “The Politics of Identity” (September *Atlantic*). He states that the ban of nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed ships from New Zealand ports was/is “a policy implicitly aimed at the United States.” He supports his statement with excerpts from novels and movies which point to a resentment and contempt for “everything American.”

Harlan ignores the facts that New Zealand has a long, frustrating history of attempting to prevent France from testing nuclear weapons and dumping nuclear waste in the South Pacific (hence the desire for a nuclear-free zone); that the ban also precludes British and French nuclear ships from its ports; and that New Zealanders insult only family: the British, Aussies, Yanks (which includes Canadians), and Irish.

Harlan also states that New Zealand “clings to Britain,” and fought in both the Boer War and the Gallipoli campaign. He makes no issue of the fact that New Zealand fought in Europe, North

Africa, Korea, and Vietnam, and contributed to the peace-keeping forces in Lebanon, with American servicemen. He also ignores the cultural, historical, political, and religious bonds that exist between New Zealand and the United States.

JOHN OLD
Little Rock, Ark.

“The Politics of Identity” made an interesting reading and provided some half-accurate generalizations about New Zealanders but surely missed the point about our nuclear-ship ban. The great majority of New Zealanders, out of self-interest, have asked themselves if the United States, Britain, France, Russia, or any other country could protect us or themselves from nuclear attack. The answer being clearly no, we have decided that the best defense is not to have anything nuclear near us, so that we are not perceived as a threat during a nuclear war. It may not be a perfect defense, but it would be interesting to take a poll of your readers to see where they would prefer to be during a nuclear war: the United States, any European country, or New Zealand.

TERRY SHAGIN
Marlborough Sounds, New Zealand

David Harlan replies:

Mr. Old is right: New Zealand and the United States *do* share a tradition. And the dispute between our countries *is* a family affair. That’s why it has aroused such bitter resentment. Since the Second World War the United States has largely replaced England as the dominant power in New Zealand, but without bothering to cultivate the New Zealanders’ affections or to inspire their loyalty. This is why cultural nationalism in New Zealand is so filled with deflected oedipal hostilities: rather than attacking England directly, as the Aussies do, New Zealand writers redirect their fury toward the American usurper.

Mr. Old insists that the port ban is *not* directed specifically at the United States, that it “also precludes British and French nuclear ships,” but neither the British nor the French have ever sent nuclear ships to New Zealand; only the United States has done that. Moreover, the evidence suggests that the primary impetus behind the port ban is not anti-nuclear but anti-American. For example, the most recent opinion polls, conducted for the government’s Defense Committee of Enquiry earlier this year,

found that of those most strongly committed to the port ban—those willing to see New Zealand leave ANZUS in order to preserve the ban—only one in four said they felt that way because of nuclear weapons. Mistrust and resentment of the United States was the reason most commonly given, followed by a desire for neutrality. Moreover, when asked which country constituted the greatest military threat to New Zealand, one of seven New Zealanders named the United States. Only the Soviet Union was named more often.

READING ULYSSES

The expense of editorial space and money—not to mention the time of the reader—devoted to Martin Amis’s silly commentary on *Ulysses* (“Teacher Pet,” September *Atlantic*) might have been justified and even appropriate had the reviewer confined himself to his obvious subtext: James Joyce as the absolute antithesis of the writer’s writer, for the simple reason that he leaves simple scribblers for Mammon, like Amis at a loss to justify themselves. But his mean cover for that subtext, as spokesman for the poor reader who finds the book too difficult, was graceless and unfair.

I think Joyce should always be read with popcorn and beer close at hand and not in Amis’s fashion, which is with dry toast and a bone caught in your throat. Good Lord: from reading his review one wouldn’t have an inkling that the book is a comic novel. But the reviewer betrays himself with that slip about patronage, which is Amis’s word for someone who dies before his time: poverty-stricken, sick, and blind. Or gets the sense that to Amis, James Joyce is his own private, dark Molly: a writer who has gained a half century’s worth of adulation from both readers and critics, a writer who, in a phrase, had it both ways.

And so Amis works up his bile and, on the pretext of a corrected edition now released in paperback form, takes pen in hand to settle an old score. The 5,000 corrections are accorded a paragraph but only to be made light of—though wonder how Amis would react to 5,000 typographical errors in one of his books or in one of his magazine articles. He then graciously accords Joyce the title of genius, produces a smattering of obvious quotes, irons flat the wrinkles of the

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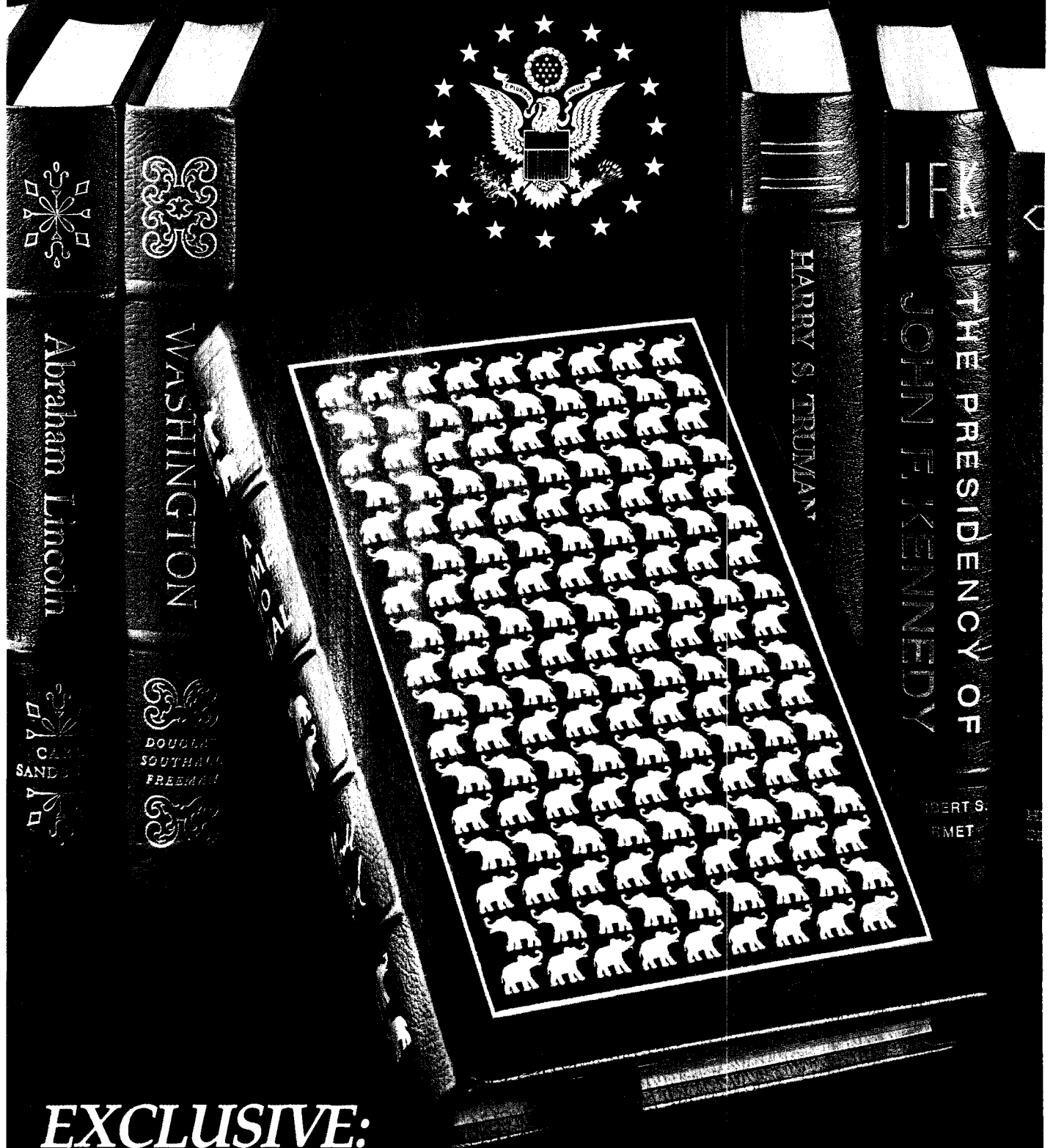
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most fecund work of literature in our century, and goes in for the kill with the horrid metaphor that produced the title of his review. And yet we can let the metaphor stand, for Amis fits right in; let James Joyce be the teacher's pet, and let Amis take his place as the jealous, cowardly classroom bully.

BILL WYMAN
Berkeley, Calif.

Martin Amis asks, "Who reads *Ulysses* for the hell of it?" and implies, in his review of the newly edited text of Joyce's masterpiece, that almost nobody does. As co-founder of the James Joyce Society of Washington, I hasten to assure Amis that there are quite a number of people out there who read *Ulysses* "for the hell of it"—meaning, I assume, that they read it for pleasure. Not all of the 400-odd Joyce Society members are academics by any means. They are doctors, lawyers, tax accountants, housewives, government workers. One of them, a retired dentist, offers a course in *Ulysses* in the Institute for Learning in Retirement, a non-credit program of The American University. He and his students read *Ulysses* because they love the book and want to talk about it with others who are similarly infatuated. For three years in a row a friend of mine who is not connected with the Joyce Society has organized a public reading of *Ulysses*: not only do the readers read aloud for love of the book but those who come to listen can be found following the performance in their copies of the text. I could go on, but I think the point has been made. Amis needn't worry his little head about *Ulysses*: it's doing just fine, thank you.

A footnote: Gerty MacDowell is not the Citizen's daughter, as Amis mistakenly says. On June 16, 1904, her father is laid up at home in bed. But Garyowen, the dog the Citizen keeps by him in Barney Kiernan's tavern, belongs to Gerty's grandfather, whose name is Giltrap. One of the minor virtues that living with *Ulysses* fosters is the virtue of accuracy. I guess Amis hasn't lived with the book long enough to understand this.

RUDOLPH VON ABELE
*Professor Emeritus of Literature
The American University
Washington, D.C.*

Martin Amis replies:

My source, Vladimir Nabokov's *Lectures on Literature* ("Giltrap is the mater-

nal grandfather of Gerty Macdowell. . . . It would thus seem that the Citizen is Gerty Macdowell's father"), seems evidently not good enough. I apologize to all *Ulysses*-lovers. I should have read the book a few more times.

WHERE TOYS COME FROM

Thanks so much for "Where Toys Come From," by David Owen (October *Atlantic*). At five my daughter went from Fisher-Price Little People to Legos. At twelve she still finds hours of enjoyment with thousands of Legos—saves her money for new sets and always asks for more at birthday and Christmas. She has gone from simple block buildings to complex structures.

GLORIA GONZALEZ
Columbus, Miss.

Children have always needed to learn to control their environment rather than be controlled by it. But in this brave new world of mass media, developing minds are now invaded by images and themes far more pervasive and compelling than ever before—and for no more merit than to make someone else rich. When I tell friends that I don't want my son to become a walking commercial—with toys, school supplies, or clothing that has any identification with mass-marketed toy characters or themes—they complain that my son will be left out. And that is exactly what I want for him. Appealing to the need for security through conformity is no way to raise responsible Americans.

CAROL ANNE JONES
Falls Church, Va.

One is reminded of Roland Barthes's short essay "Toys," in which he writes:

All the toys one commonly sees are essentially a microcosm of the adult world; they are all reduced copies of human objects. . . . Faced with this world of faithful and complicated objects, the child can only identify himself as owner, as user, never as creator; he does not invent the world, he uses it. . . .

JAN PARR
Chicago, Ill.

David Owen refers to the interplay between toy companies and children's television—that is, the existence of cartoon shows that are actually ex-

tended product promotions for characters like Strawberry Shortcake and Masters of the Universe. Regarding this phenomenon he says, "The substantial cost of creating television show has encouraged toy companies to favor products that are well thought out, well designed, and not likely to disappear overnight: fad toys don't earn back multimillion-dollar television investments."

The attention given these products goes into marketing, with little thought going into the design of the toy itself. Whatever play value a child gets is of little or no concern to the licensors. This cynical manipulation of children's innocence—this attention to selling the sizzle without any concern for the steak—should concern every parent.

Owen cites the success of Lego toys, saying that the company decided that "the ideal toy was one that both left an suggested much to the imagination, that was not limited in its appeal, and that could be expanded indefinitely." I concur with this, but, unfortunately, these values are the ones that are singularly lacking in the toys that capitalize on the licensing phenomenon. Licensed toys leave nothing to the imagination; in fact the existence of the cartoons is saying to children that they wouldn't know what to do with the toy without an adult script to direct them.

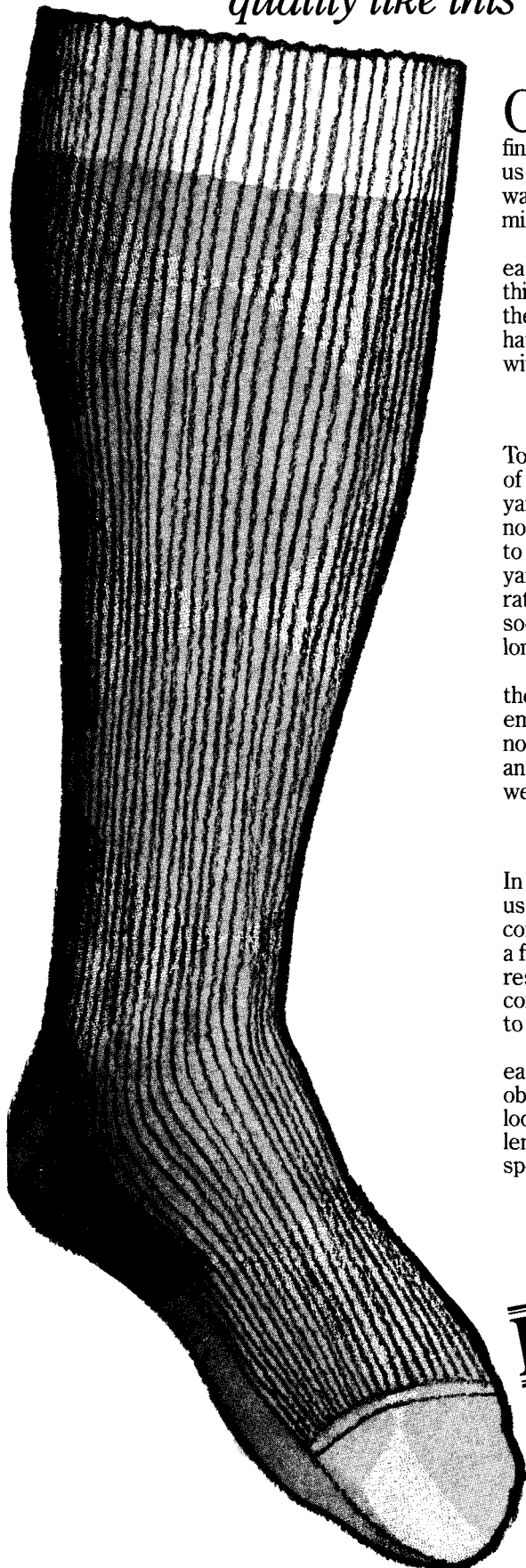
The licensing phenomenon hurts us all: toy manufacturers, retailers, and children. Manufacturers are harried to come up with fad after fad. And the very fact that Star Wars characters, Cabbage Patch Kids, Masters of the Universe, GoBots, and others all came and went as quickly as they did is proof that there was absolutely no enduring value in these toys, as there is in such perennial classics as art materials, ball unit blocks, and dolls.

PETER F. REYNOLDS
*President,
Brio Scanditoy Corporation
Milwaukee, Wis.*

LET THE RECORD SHOW . . .

No one can claim that *The Atlantic* is not an informative publication. I learned for the first time from your July issue ("The Origins of the Underclass," by Nicholas Lemann) that I am among those who want "the government and the black leadership" to go around "talking about values." Also on my agenda:

Before you say \$11.50 is too much to pay for these
Lands' End socks, remember:
quality like this comes only from France.



Our search for the finest quality men's sock we could find—the kind of search typical of us at Lands' End—took us all the way to the Dore Dore knitting mills in France.

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To be a little more specific...

To begin with, this sock is knitted of natural fibers—from plied yarn, not single strands, to make not only for a smoother finish but to provide durability, too. It is yarn-dyed, strand by strand, rather than piece-dyed, sock by sock. This is to assure truer, longer-lasting color.

In the circular knit process the manufacturer uses, he employs more needles than normal to produce a denser knit and provide more support, longer wear and better shape retention.

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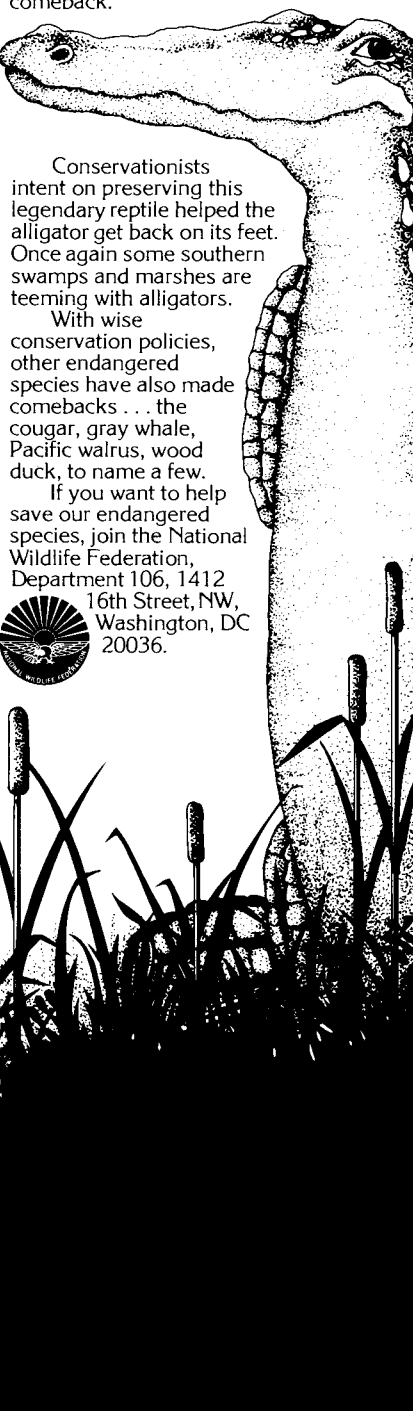
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apparently, is "small-scale enterprise" for blacks. Is it old-fashioned to ask just where I said these things?

What I did say was, "In addition to the usual *ad hominem* attacks and overheated rhetoric, there has also developed a fundamental disregard for the truth. . . . Lies out of whole cloth are not uncommon and straw men dot the landscape" (*Civil Rights*, p. 123).

THOMAS SOWELL
Senior Fellow
Hoover Institution
Stanford, Calif.

Nicholas Lemann replies:

Though not with the intention of spreading lies about Mr. Sowell, I did, in trying to summarize in a paragraph the views of the most prominent black conservatives, paint with too broad a brush. I'm sorry.

ADVICE & CONSENT

Does a large volume of water come back to a boil faster than a small one after adding pasta? Corby Kummer implies so in his article "Pasta" (July *Atlantic*), but Eric J. Evans (Letters to the Editor, September *Atlantic*) cites principles of thermodynamics and offers a "thought experiment" to suggest otherwise. The principles of thermodynamics are not to be denied lightly, but a thought experiment seems somehow less than satisfying.

I put eight quarts of water into a pot on our kitchen stove and brought it to a rolling boil. I then quickly added twelve ounces of fettuccine and recorded the time it took to return to the same rolling boil. This was repeated with another twelve ounces of fettuccine and half the amount of fresh water. The result: eight quarts took 90 seconds to re-boil, four quarts took 130 seconds—44 percent longer! This was confirmed by a completely independent and unimpeachable observer (my wife, Ann).

The resolution of this puzzle lies not in the laws of thermodynamics (which simply account for the energy involved) but in understanding the *rate* at which energy can be added to the water. Bubbles can form on the bottom of the pot more easily when the water is close to the boiling point (as in the larger pot of water). The rapid bubbling stirs the upper layers of cooler water, increasing the *rate* of energy addition, thus reducing the time needed to return to the same

condition as before the pasta was added.

EDWARD HAUPTMAN
Pasadena, Calif.

mother gave me archy to read when
was a child

so it s been awhile

but i do seem to recall that archy

did not create by lightly hopping

key to key

as your editors state in the october issu
au contraire

archy pounded out his vers libre

letter by letter

by climbing to the upper reaches of tl

typewriter

and hurling himself headfirst

on the intended key

oh the pain the artist suffers

this is what he refers to in

quote no literary slave unquote when I

says

i am resting my head

it was a delight to hear from archy aga

and to know there s life in the old

mehitabel yet

exclamation point

prudence todd moffe

louisville, 1

I don't mean to take the spark out of Robert P. Crease's article "From Spark to Flame" (September *Atlantic*) but one error must be corrected. He says that a transformer boosts the *power* from a battery. If this were the case, all of our energy problems would be over. What he meant to say was that the voltage potential was boosted. Conservation of energy and all that. Thanks.

JOHN B. MAGGIOI
Seattle, Wa.

In her interesting essay "The Louvre New Gallery" (August *Atlantic*), Howard Brubach correctly notes the favored status of fashion under François Mitterrand's Socialist regime—perhaps a subtle way of undermining the idea that old drab or dowdy would be appropriate for an agenda. However, in writing of Edmond Charles-Roux, the curator of the inaugural show, she says that "a good eye is no substitute for a good mind." While M. Roux may well have both, she also has a good connection with the regime—the widow of Mitterrand's former Minister of the Interior, Gaston Defferre. That cannot have been insignificant in her selection as a powerful figure in this new state-sponsored enterprise.

MARION HUNTER
Paris, France

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Victor Th. Engwall

In 1853, in the little seaport town of Gävle, Sweden, Victor Theodor Engwall sorted and roasted and tasted and tested. Tirelessly, he experimented with the best, most exotic coffees that came into port until, at last, he achieved what he so stubbornly sought: a uniquely perfect coffee.

THE KING APPROVES

It is said that one chilly day, Gustav V, King of Sweden, stopped in Gävle and tasted it. So enchanted was he that Gevalia Kaffe was appointed coffee to His Majesty and the Royal Court.

Today, this remarkable coffee is still made in Gävle by people imbued with Engwall's obsession for perfection. Generations of Swedish kings have awarded it the Royal Seal of Approval, and Gevalia has become Sweden's most popular, most beloved coffee.

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Ground.

roasts. But perhaps the biggest revelation is Gevalia Decaffeinated. Caffeine is removed naturally by a European process using the same substance that creates the effervescence in

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As this exceptional Swedish coffee is not available in mass market quantities, the only way to order it is from our Import Service. Just fill out the attached reply form. We will send you the white ceramic Regal Gevalia Kaffe Canister embossed in gold with the Royal Crest of Sweden.

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GEVALIA

KAFFE

THE JANUARY ALMANAC

THE SKIES

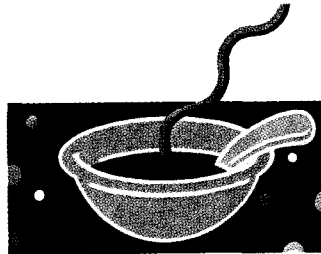
January 4, the bright object just to the right of a large crescent moon is the gas giant Jupiter; later on the same night comes the Quadrantid meteor shower, one of the liveliest of the year. 6, Twelfth Night; the red planet Mars is sandwiched between Jupiter and the First Quarter Moon. 14, Full Moon, also known this month as the Wolf Moon. 29, New Moon. For sometime in January, Japan has scheduled the launch of the marine observation satellite MOS-1 from the Tanegashima Space Center. MOS-1 will orbit the earth about 14 times a day, passing within observation range of almost all of the earth's surface during every 17-day period.



EXPIRING PATENTS

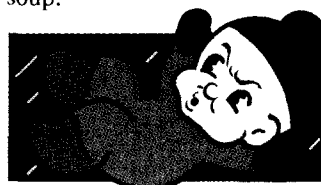
No. 3,487,575. Worm Gun. "A device for assisting in the baiting of fish hooks with fishing worms has an elongated barrel or trough-like structure which has an open top side and openings in the two ends thereof. . . . A plunger extends through one of the open ends of the barrel and may be withdrawn from the trough for purposes of loading the worm therein. Once the worm has been placed interiorly of the barrel and the cover closed, the plunger may be depressed, forcing the worm out the opposite open end into a convenient hook baiting position."

No. 3,490,410. Clapping Mittens. "A clapper mitten for each hand with the palm resting on the clapper and being removably inserted into a connection member on the back side of each clapper so that the clappers will produce more noise when brought into face to face contact than the noise produced by the act of bringing the palms together in the act of clapping."



FOOD

Americans typically consume more soup in January than in any other month. A hundred years ago, the nation's first ready-to-serve commercial soup, made by the Franco-American Food Company, appeared on the market. Ninety years ago the Campbell Soup Company introduced America to condensed soup. Fifty years ago the Pepperidge Farm Company was founded, and roughly 30 years later Pepperidge Farm introduced a ready-to-serve line. By now Pepperidge Farm soups have become "semi-condensed"; Campbell has both introduced its own lines of ready-to-serve soup and bought Pepperidge Farm. All in all, Americans will consume 75 million gallons of soup this month. If kitchen faucets ran soup, instead of water, and if you turned yours on full force, it would have to run for 20 years to put out this quantity of soup.



HEALTH & SAFETY

By some measures January is an average of 20 percent snowier than February, the next most snowy month. Snow is dangerous stuff. Some 3,000 people who have injured themselves with snow blowers turn up in hospital emergency rooms over the course of a typical winter. About two thirds of the injuries involve fingers; about one in eight is an amputation. In a cold, snowy month the number of fatal heart attacks can be thousands, or as much as 20 percent, higher than the monthly average. Shoveling snow is implicated in many of

these deaths. Also, the rate of death from falls—the most common kind of fatal accident other than motor-vehicle-related accidents—goes up in winter. Skiing, sledding, and snowmobiling accidents bring another 90,000 people to the nation's hospital emergency rooms in winter.



ARTS & LETTERS

As people head back to work and school after the holiday season, movie attendance will drop 30 percent below the December level. January is a busy month for the nation's printers, however: it is when the lion's share of the books to be published during the big spring season are printed and bound. Some 50,000 new titles will appear in 1987. January 23, U.S. Television & Radio Commercials Festival—the Mobius Awards. The number of commercials entered this year—some 3,000—is down by 13 percent from last year, reflecting a slump in the advertising industry.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographers predict 3.9 million births and 2.2 million deaths in the coming year in the United States. There will be 2.4 million marriages. The number of married couples without children under age 18 slightly exceeds the number with children under 18; however, a reversal in the relative standings is imminent. Some 170,000 elementary- and secondary-school teaching positions will open up in 1987, but the nation's state colleges and universities will graduate only



140,000 new teachers. A total of 1.7 million new jobs will be created during the coming year. Women will take two of the three for every one taken by a man.

GOVERNMENT

January 1, many of the ballot propositions voted on last November go into effect. State lotteries can now be implemented in Florida, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, and South Dakota. The Georgia General Assembly has the authority to increase fees on marriage licenses and birth certificates in order to fund programs to prevent child abuse and neglect. Individual campaign contributions are now limited to \$2,000 in Arizona. California, English is now the official state language. January 5, the first session of the 100th Congress begins.



25 YEARS AGO

John Spencer Churchill, writing about his uncle Winston, the January, 1962, issue of *Atlantic*: "'Oh, look,' said my uncle brightly. 'Cat has mouse. . . . He commented, 'How interesting to see him exercise control over his victim.'"

"William Nicholson and I felt a bit green at the sight, as Brendan Bracken, that tough politician who had helped me throw heckle down the stairs at my uncle's meetings, looked quite ill.

"After a tense moment my uncle declared, 'Now the time.' And indeed, quite suddenly, with no fuss, the entire mouse disappeared down Mr. Cat's throat, head first. There was no chewing. Then he cleaned his whiskers and gently stepped over to the fire for a nap.

"The stricken silence that followed was broken by my uncle, proudly observing, 'You see, a whole army destroyed one mouse!'"

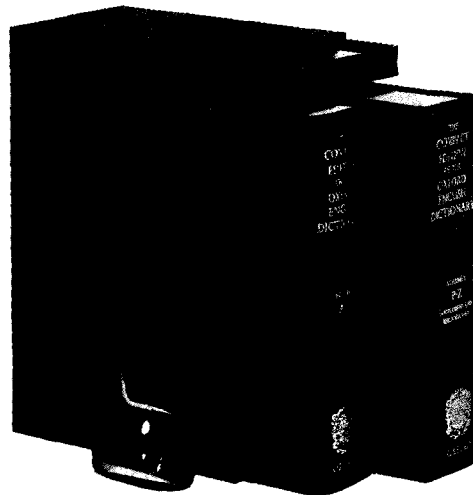
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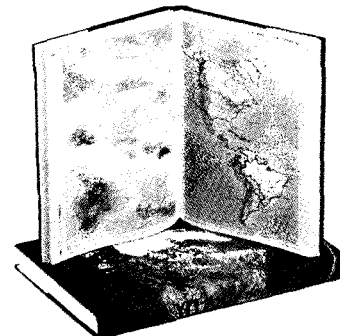
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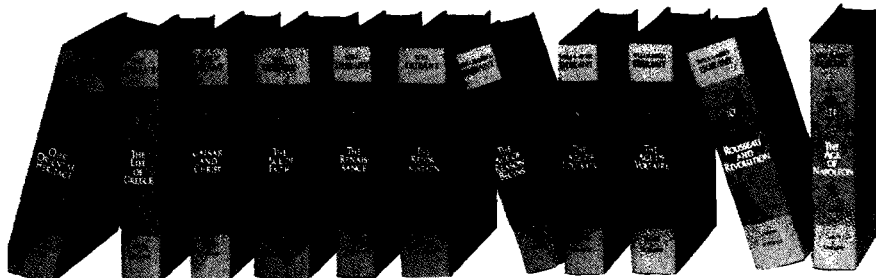
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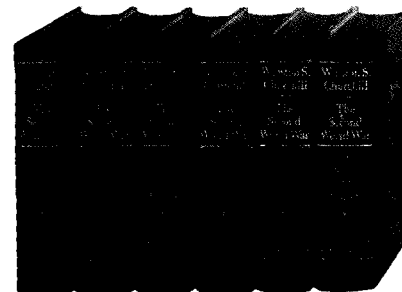


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REPORTS & COMMENT

NOTES MARX'S CARBUNCLES

YOU ARE A Cuban farmer, and the years have been good to you: a little plot of land, three daughters, a brace of sons. But last year you wanted some extra money as a hedge against hard luck. So you opened a fruit stand—nothing fancy, mind you, just a few baskets of produce piled up by the side of the road, enough to tempt passersby into spending a few pesos on your sweet peaches. The government encouraged this. Following the 1980 boat lift of 125,000 unhappy citizens to the United States the government feared further disaffection and sanctioned farmer's markets, among other consumer-oriented palliatives, to head it off. But just recently, in one of those abrupt changes of course through which Communist regimes try to force the locomotive of history onto the track of progress, the government abolished the farmer's markets. In a series of speeches President Fidel Castro called for a return to a centrally controlled economy and said that he wanted private farms, of which there are 70,000 in Cuba, annexed to the anonymous felicity of the state-run collective farms. ("There was too much freedom," one scholar told *The Wall Street Journal*. "The system appeared to be loosening.") Using the familiar blood-stained rhetoric, Castro spoke of "crushing" the "neo-capitalists (and) neo-bourgeois who are attempting to get ahead." He meant you. Your crime? Attempting to get ahead.

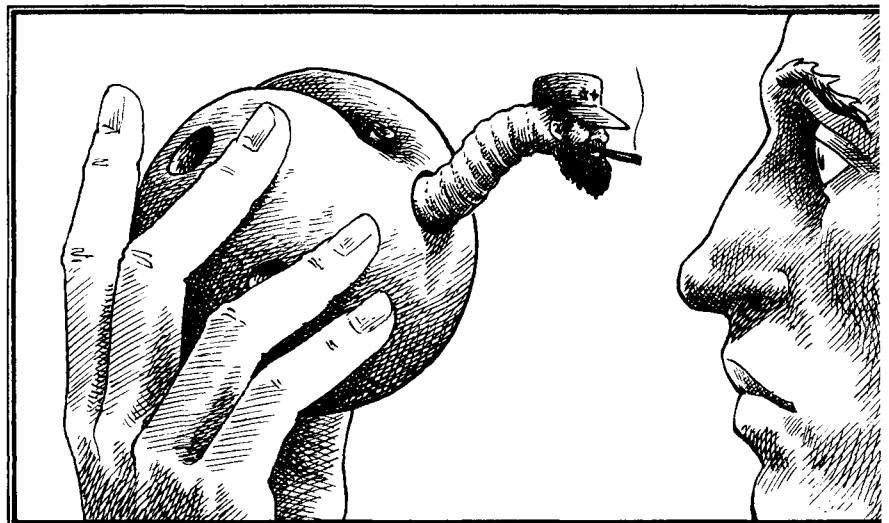
However that phrase of Castro's would have sounded to our imaginary

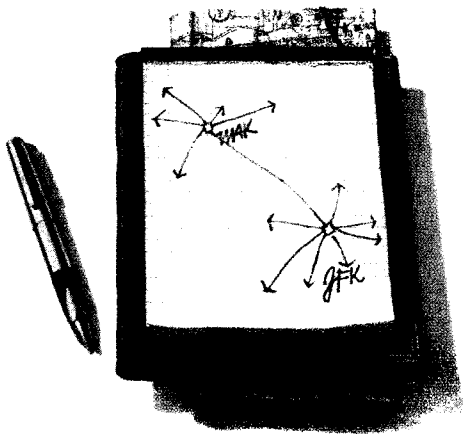
farmer, to us it is one of the most nakedly revelatory political utterances of recent times. Here is what is wrong with socialism as it has been realized in the Marxist-Leninist revolutions. Getting ahead is a crime, owning your own bit of land an offense against equality and fraternity. Proudhon, that saintly Utopian Socialist, called property "theft." Marx, a son of comfort who lived off kited checks from Engels, called it a "soulless commodity." These views were foolish but harmless: only the thinkers' wives and children suffered from them. But Castro has his army and his secret police and a reputation for ferocious caprice, and so he can make a whole people dance to his dementias.

Reflect for a moment on Castro's inadvertently revealing statement, and something of the perverse spiritual prestige attached to socialism comes through. Getting ahead, after all, means leaving someone else behind; and according to socialism's morality of the hive, that's wrong. In one of his speeches Castro said that sights like our imaginary farmer's roadside stand might create "ill will"

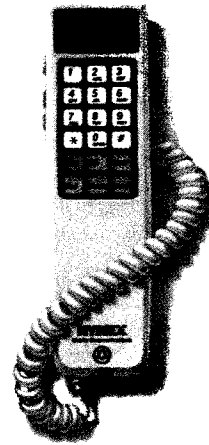
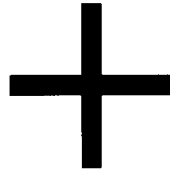
among the collective farmers. Founded on envy, socialism takes care to control the spread of envy.

Karl Marx wrote quite a lot about alienation and in his own life was painfully familiar with it, spending all those years sitting on the hard benches of the British Museum, alone with his rancio and carbuncles. One wonders whether his theory would have had less hate in it and thus incited less hateful realization if it weren't for those carbuncles. Yet the carbuncles, too, have an odd spiritual prestige. Marx got them by spitting the flesh in a sustained act of discipline and self-denial—a late triumph, when you stop and think of it, of the monastic spirit. Socialism is founded on those carbuncles. It is a materialistic philosophy with an ascetic core. Regimes based on it will not tolerate the heresy announced by the Czech philosopher Erazim Kohák: a brilliant essay published in *Dissent*—that property is the way in which man alienates from the physical world mitigated, for it makes "matter meaningful." Our Cuban farmer, proud of his peaches, was fighting the good fight

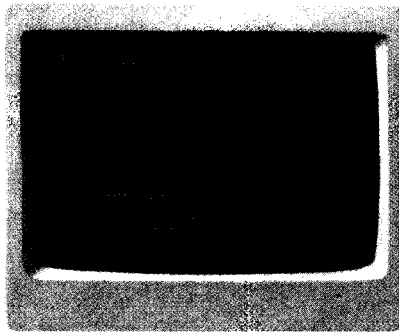
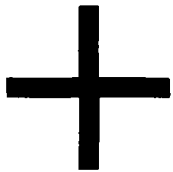




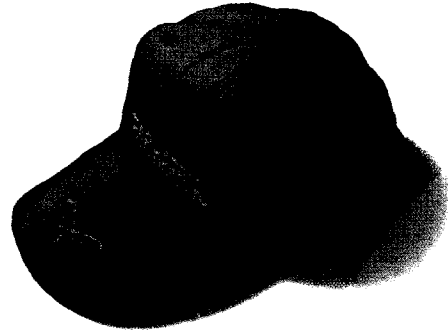
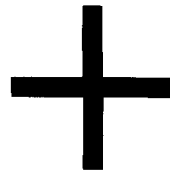
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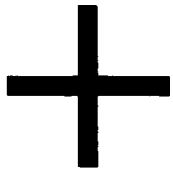
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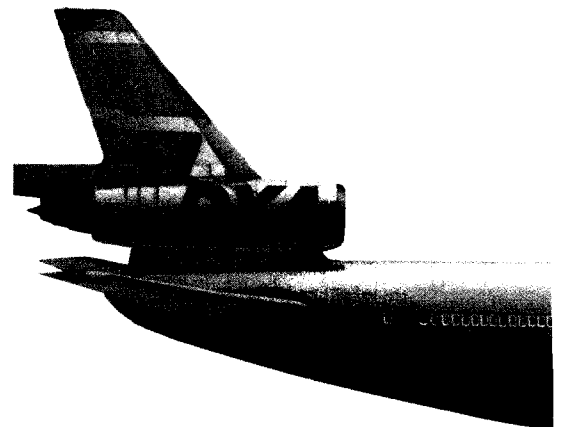
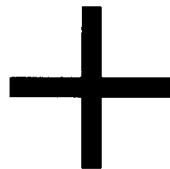
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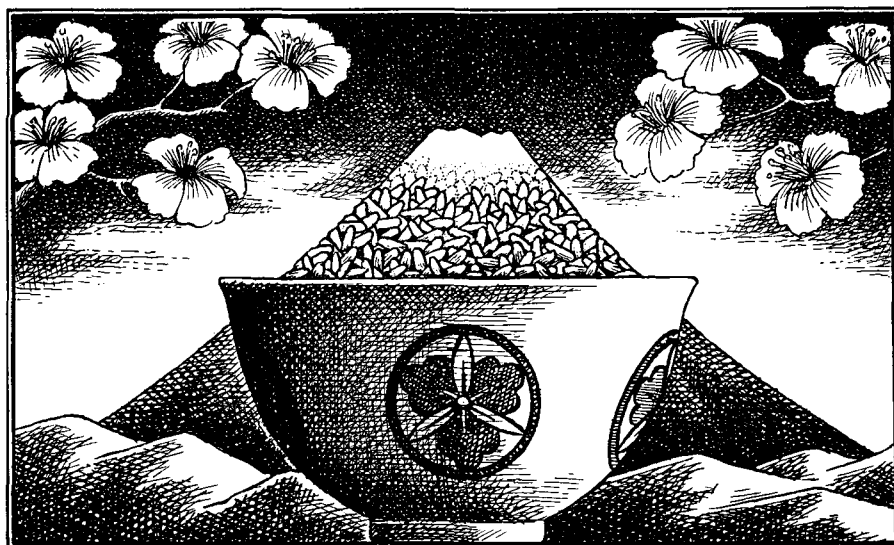
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against alienation. In the moment of their ripening, he and nature were one. Matter—the dusty god of the materialist—had been made meaningful.

Would the matter have been less meaningful if the means of production had been socially owned—if the peaches had been grown on a collective farm? An American, reared in the prejudices of individualism, must answer yes. Social property—the subway, the highway—may be useful to me. Private property—

my golden fruit—is part of me. To use a biblical tag famously quoted by Marx, it adds “a cubit and more” to my stature. That’s why Castro hates it. He wants men smaller, the better to bully them. “Workers of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your peaches.” There you have the real slogan of the revolution that turns seventy this year and of its outpost in the tropics presided over by that logorhetic dictator.

—Jack Beatty



EAST ASIA

THE RICE PLOT

How rice farmers control Japan's politics and distort its economic system

WHO IS REALLY TO blame for our tiresome trade problems with Japan? Everyone has heard about the usual suspects—inde fatigable Japanese businessmen, big-spending American politicians, lackadaisical American workers, and so on. But there is another candidate whose significance is well recognized in Japan but barely comprehended in the United States: the doughy Japanese rice farmer.

The farmers' importance is not obvious from looking at the trade charts. Japan grows about 11 million tons a year of the distinctive gluey japonica rice that its people prize above all others. If every Japanese paddy were drained tomorrow and converted into, say, a small export-electronics shop, Japan would have to spend only about \$3 billion to import rice. That would just about offset three weeks' surplus in Japan's balance of trade with the United States.

Nonetheless, the farmers may be the key to the trade problems, because they have such an important effect on how other Japanese live, and because their status says so much about Japan's mercantilist approach (We Sell, You Buy) to foreign trade. Their impact is indirect, and it operates through the vehicle that affects everything else about Japan—the cost and scarcity of land.

Japan is, of course, a small island nation short of everything except people. It has a population half as large as that of the United States in an area smaller than California—or, to put it another way, a population twice as large as France's in two-thirds the space. But Japan seems even more crowded than those numbers would suggest. In part that's because of the mountains, which take up two thirds of the total area, but it's also because of the farmers, who take up almost half of what's left. Japan's land area is 378,000 square kilometers, or about 151,000 square miles. Of that, 66.9 percent is mountains and forest, and another 3.1 percent is rivers and channels. Farmland takes up 14.3 percent, leaving houses, offices, factories, roads, parks, schools, and stores to be squeezed onto the remaining 15.7 percent. In contrast, the

United States is twenty-five times large to begin with, and a higher proportion of its land is usable.

The significance of the crowding is not simply that it discomfits big-boned Americans who are used to the wide open prairies but that it distorts so many other aspects of Japanese life. Because land is so expensive, people cannot afford to buy more than a tiny plot on which to build a house. Real-estate ads do not say “house on acre and a half” or even “half an acre”; they say “124.93 square meters.” Because the price of land keeps rising, people save in order to invest in land itself—rather than in large houses, furnishings, appliances, or other items whose purchase would stimulate economic activity and that might conceivably even come from abroad. Because the price never stops going up, no one wants to sell. Because no one wants to sell, the price goes up even more.

Kenichi Ohmae, the director of the Tokyo office of McKinsey and Company, a consulting firm, has pointed out that at current prices Japan is worth more than the United States. He is not making an abstract moral judgment—he's talking about the two countries' land. The Japanese land market has all the markings of a classic speculative bubble, in which price bears no relation to economic fundamentals. But before a bubble can burst, someone has to be eager to sell, which has not happened in Japan.

Perhaps the Japanese would still be intent on exports, rather than domestic consumption, if they had bigger houses and more money left over after paying for land. But I think the spartan nature of Japanese home life encourages salary men to spend more time at the (comparatively) plush office, dreaming up new export plans, and at the bars, cementing those crucial work-group relationships. What's more, it reinforces the export-or-die mentality that helped Japan recover after the war but is now making problems for it and the rest of the world. The United States needs more of that anxiety-induced energy; Japan could do with less.

Therefore, anything that makes the crowded, expensive country more crowded and expensive than necessary is bad for the Japanese, since it keeps their living standard artificially low. And it's bad for everyone else, since it increases the ferocity of Japan's export drive. This brings us back to agriculture and in particular to rice.

OF THE HALF OF all flat land taken by farming, more than half is taken by rice. To spell it out: one quarter of the precious habitable land in this tiny country is used to grow one crop. After a three-week train trip from the far north to the far south of Japan, I was surprised at the rice-growing proportion was not even higher. Ninety percent of Japan's farm households grow at least some rice. To the naked eye Japan seems to be carpeted with rice paddies. Although the pressure of human crowding is most intense in the cities, above all Tokyo, nearly every part of the country suggests struggle to the death between farm and land used for anything else. On the train routes through Japan's "rice belt," in the northern part of the main island, Honshu, the scenery alternates between mountains and rice paddies, with only an occasional factory to vary the landscape. Tiny houses, slightly larger than the infamous "rabbit hutches" of the cities, are tucked in among the paddies, typically with only a dike-top walkway, a few feet wide, separating the house from the fields. This is the Japanese equivalent of the vast, unvarying fields of Kansas, though it is wet, hilly, miniaturized. Even in the major cities—Osaka, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Tokyo—I have seen little paddies slipped in between houses or office buildings. Hokkaido, the frontierlike northern island of Japan, is startling to visitors, because it offers something found nowhere else in the nation: flat land just sitting there, unused.

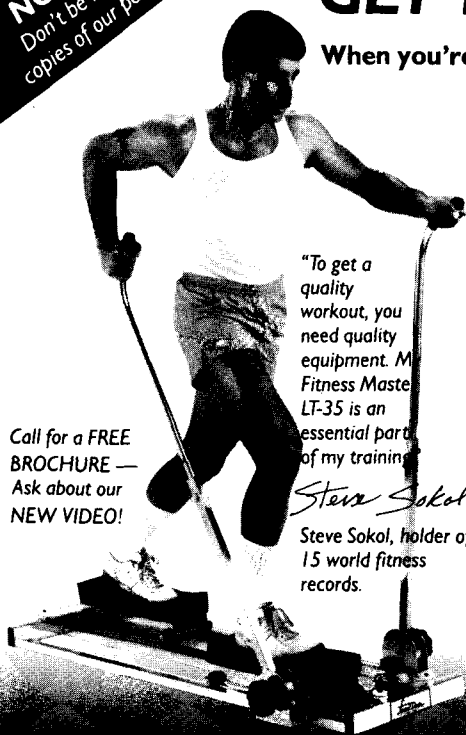
By any normal economic reasoning, Japan's insistence on devoting so much land to farming, especially rice, is insane, as if Manhattan were attempting to grow its own wheat and corn. Naturally the farmers are hardworking and diligent. Their yields per acre are not far behind those in the rest of the world. Paddies in Japan can produce 480 to 500 kilograms of rice on a tenth of a hectare; the average in California is 620. (I am using the metric system because Japan uses it. A kilogram is 2.2 pounds; a hectare is 2.47 acres.) But each of those hectares is so costly, and the typical farm is so small—excluding those in Hokkaido, two thirds of the farms are one hectare or smaller, and it would take 151 average-sized Japanese farms to equal one average-sized farm in the United States—at Japan's production cost per kilogram of rice is grotesquely out of line with the rest of the world's. It's hard to make precise comparisons, since the yen

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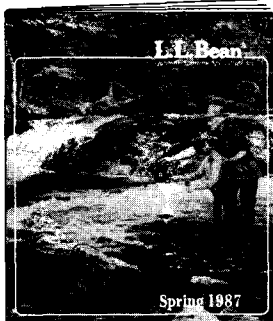
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☐ Other _____

has been rising rapidly in value while international farm prices have been going down. According to estimates made in the fall of 1986, Japanese rice costs somewhere around six times as much as the "highest-quality" (that is, most japonica-like) California rice and ten times as much as rice from the world's lowest-cost producer, Thailand.

Apart from returning seamen who sneak in bags of California rice, and manufacturers who use processed rice for crackers, the Japanese import not a grain of this less-expensive foreign rice. Indeed, Japan now grows more rice than its people can eat. (Production per hectare has been going up; consumption is going down.) One consequence is that Japanese families spend on food about 30 percent of all that they spend, which is about twice as much as Americans do, and clearly more than the Japanese would if they opened their markets. Because the government, which controls all sales of rice, gives the farmers an even higher price than it charges consumers, the Japanese also pay for rice farming in their taxes. The total public cost of rice-subsidy programs is about \$6 billion a year. Together with subsidies for the Japan National Railroad (which is about to be "privatized"), the rice programs help explain why Japan runs sizable budget deficits while spending next to nothing on defense. Farmland is almost exempt from tax, which further increases the burden on everyone else. These extra expenses for food, taxes, and, of course, housing help explain why many Japanese feel they are living on the margin, even as they bankrupt competitors around the world.

Kenichi Ohmae has waged a one-man campaign to show that "we salaried workers are the victims of rice farmers." He points out that the selling price of most assets bears some relation to their profitability. A business might be sold for twenty or twenty-five times its annual profit. Rice-growing land in California is typically sold for thirty times its annual profit. But in Japan, Ohmae says, paddy land may sell for 2,000 times its profit—which is to say, it scarcely sells at all. On a visit to Yamagata prefecture, a rice-growing stronghold in northern Honshu, I asked prefectural officials about recent sales of farming land. None of the men I spoke with, including one who had worked there since the 1950s, could remember any sales.

Somewhere in Japan some land is of course sold for houses, but the price is

out of sight. From 1960 to 1980 the overall cost of living in Japan went up by 600 to 700 percent. The price of residential land in big cities went up by 1,800 percent, and the price of farmland by 2,700 percent. The rigidity of the land market may reflect some deep Japanese desire to cling to a family piece of soil, but the artificially prosperous rice business also has an effect. Because of rice subsidies, farmers can make a profit on land that would otherwise have to be put to some different use. Ohmae says that the ultimate solution to Japan's housing problem does not lie in public-housing schemes or lower mortgage rates. Instead, he says, the only answer is to open up the country to rice imports, which would drive the farmers' price down. He contends, "If the price of rice in Japan became as low as in the U.S., the price of land would become one fifth the current price," assuming that land prices remained 2,000 times the annual rice profit. "Putting it another way, land for housing is costly because the government supports the price of rice." Ohmae has proposed an elaborate agricultural-reform scheme, to encourage farmers to grow other crops and prevent them from using any flat land within fifty kilometers of big cities. Even if his calculations are wildly off, and even if the price of land might fall by only one half or one fourth, his central point—expensive rice means expensive land—is hard to dispute.

Why do the Japanese put up with it? Rice farmers made up nearly half the population just after the war, but now they make up only 12 percent, and 90 percent of them hold down regular jobs and farm only part-time. Why can't the rest of the population, overtaxed and ill housed, change the system that produces the overpriced rice? Some of the answers are understandable by Western reasoning, but others hint at the enormous gulf between Japanese and Western motivations.

ONE PART OF the Japanese system is perversely "rational" in a way that Americans can easily understand. Like America's subsidies for tobacco and milk, Japan's farm policy is partly a reflection of sheer political muscle. In the gerrymandered Japanese electoral system rural votes are more than twice as important as urban votes. Because the average rural voter is older than the urban voter, he is more likely to vote. Like the retirement centers of Florida, Yama-

gata and Niigata prefectures muster high turnouts on election day. Every Japanese Prime Minister since 1960 has been elected by a rural constituency.

Japan's farmers are organized into nationwide network of agricultural cooperatives, and these are tremendously important sources of money for politicians in the dominant Liberal Democratic Party (that is, the conservative) Party. Hard as this may be to believe, it costs politicians even more to stay in office in Japan than it does in the United States, because their official allowances are so low. In return for contributions from the crops, politicians pledge support; the "rice caucus" numbers 120 of the 511 members of the Diet's lower house. The cooperatives have their own stake in keeping things as they are: they have become multifaceted businesses, operating savings plans and selling machinery and supplies. All of this would come to a halt if the market opened up.

Many Japanese claim that they have another practical reason for growing their own, costly rice: if they didn't they would be importing nearly all the food and would be too vulnerable to disrupted supplies. Japan is already the world's largest net importer of food, and is proportionally more dependent on imported food supplies than any other major power. It now produces only half the calories its people eat, down from 80 percent soon after the war. About a third of its farm imports come from the United States, which enjoys a number of sweetheart deals giving its wheat and beef preference over cheaper products from China, Australia, and Argentina. Rice is practically the only major farm item for which Japan can satisfy its own demand. The rice "self-sufficiency" ratio is about 110 percent—10 percent more is grown than eaten. (This sits in warehouses and either spoils or is periodically unloaded at a loss on the export market.) Since nearly all the wheat, corn, and soybeans consumed in Japan come from America, the overall self-sufficiency ratio for grains and legumes is only 32 percent.

In a 1980 Japanese poll 75 percent of the respondents agreed that "in principle, domestic [farm] production should be increased whenever possible." On the other hand, 16 percent chose the alternative answer "It is better to consume imported products if they are less expensive." When I have asked Japanese friends about importing rice, most of them have asked me right back, "But how could we trust you

to keep selling?" The main evidence of American unreliability is the hideous "Nixon shocks" of the early 1970s, in which the United States suspended soybean exports for a couple of days. "We live on rice," Iwao Yamaguchi, the senior executive director of the national alliance of farmers' cooperatives, called Zenchu, told me. "It is outside free-trade principles. We are a hundred percent self-sufficient, and we must always be. Japan is an independent nation, and it is incumbent on us to be independent in rice supply."

If you're an outsider, it's hard to take his concern quite as seriously as the Japanese obviously do. For one thing, rice is less and less a staple in the Japanese diet. Only twenty-five years ago rice accounted for almost half of Japan's daily caloric intake. Now, as people have turned to bread and noodles, it's just above one quarter. If simply having enough food to fill people's bellies were the government's main goal, it could lay up a several years' stockpile of rice from the world market for the cost of one year's domestic subsidy. Or, as Kenichi Ohmae proposes, it could buy enough rice in Arkansas to meet Japan's total rice demand for the cost of about two years' worth of subsidies. Moreover, in any dispute grave enough that the United States would be trying to starve the Japanese, many other things would be getting scarce as well, starting with fuel to run the tractors and cook the rice. Yamaguchi gave his most heartfelt response when I asked him whether "rice security" made sense, considering Japan's many other vulnerabilities. "We can survive without fuel," he said. "In an emergency we can pull plows through the field. Our fathers did it. We can make fertilizer of our own. But without food—above all, rice—we cannot survive."

THE MOST INTERESTING thing about the rice-security argument is that most Japanese seem to be unaware of what its logic implies. They are saying, after all, that they cannot rely on anyone else for things that really matter to them. While food may be a more elemental need than other products, the same fears accompany international trade in any basic product—steel, cars, and, these days, semiconductor chips. If the Japanese cannot trust us to sell them rice, how can they expect us to trust them? Isn't this what the whole process of world trade, "comparative advantage,"

and interdependence is all about?

For forty years the Japanese have honorably made their way in the world by appealing to others' sense of comparative advantage. They have offered steadily more attractive goods, at steadily more competitive prices. They have left it to buyers in the United States, Europe, and Asia to respond. With greater or lesser degrees of resentment, other nations have accepted the consequences of Japan's success, which are dependence on foreign supplies and disruption of local businesses. They have done so not because of theoretical reverence for free trade but as a practical matter. What would happen to an American politician who now proposed to keep out all cars made in Japan?

Almost none of the Japanese I've met have seen any contradiction between their country's dependence on more-or-less open markets elsewhere and their own fierce desire to preserve the traditional, not-too-efficient patterns of home life. Rice epitomizes the traditional customs that free trade would destroy but that the Japanese are determined to preserve.

When they think of rice, even today's urbanized Japanese think of their devoted uncle or grandmother stooped over in the fields. When they go back to the home village, they want to see the same familiar paddies, green, well tended, bearing the new year's crop. At the busy commuter-railroad station near my house in Tokyo thousands of passengers push and shove each morning but tenderly avoid the boxes full of rice seedlings, pale and fresh in the springtime rains, stalks heavy with ripe golden ears during the fall monsoon. When the first Japanese settlers moved to Hokkaido, a hundred years ago, it was a land of wheat and barley but no rice. On their deathbeds, Professor Hemmi Kenzo, of Tokyo University, has said, the lonely pioneers would ask their children to place a few grains of rice in a bamboo tube and shake it, "so the parent could at least hear the sound of rice once before he or she died."

I have seen tears well up in the eyes of a no-nonsense salaryman when he recalled his meager *hi-no-maru* lunches of the postwar days: a rectangular arrangement of snowy white rice with a small, red sour plum in the middle, resembling the Japanese *hi-no-maru* flag.

If they ever let the waves of cheap foreign rice wash in, the Japanese would mourn their lost rice fields and paddy-

based life—but Americans now mourn their dead steel mills and outdated machine-tool plants. Can the Japanese have it both ways?

One of the few people who do see the contradiction clearly is Iwao Yamaguchi, of Zenchu. The rice growers cannot compete with foreigners, he told me recently, *and they should not have to try*. The world has gotten carried away with free trade. It would destroy Japan's farmers, as it has destroyed manufacturing jobs in the United States. The root of the problem, he said, is the greed of Japanese manufacturers, deluging the world with "downpour exports." No wonder America is unhappy; he'd been to Michigan and seen laid-off auto-workers. The solution is not to spread the misery to Japan's now happy farmers but to curtail free trade across the board.

Some Japanese industrialists also recognize that their long-term interests and the farmers' are at odds. The Keidanren, Japan's rough equivalent of a national chamber of commerce, periodically appeals for more farm imports, as a way of heading off anti-Japanese protectionism overseas. The headquarters of the Keidanren and Zenchu face each other in Tokyo's Ohtemachi district, and the farmers usually respond to these appeals by draping big protest banners out their windows, directed at their adversaries across the street. Most Japanese I have spoken with seem to agree in their bones (or "in the stomach," as they would put it) with the farmers, not the businessmen. Far from complaining about the price of food or land, they regard the social cost of imports as being too heavy to bear. When the U.S. Rice Millers' Association formally protested Japan's closed market last September, most Japanese seemed to see it not as a straw of hope for lower prices but as a threat to a cherished way of life.

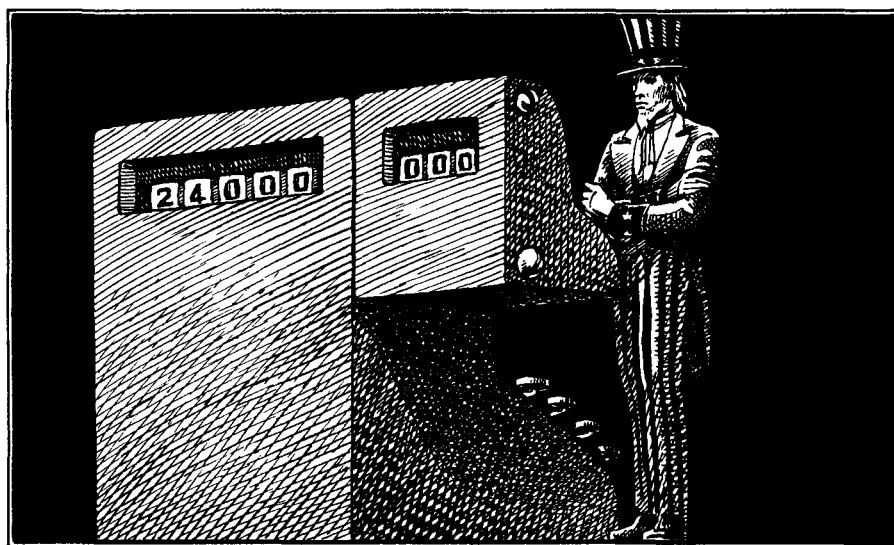
Eventually and incompletely, the rice-farmer problem may solve itself. Year by year the total paddy acreage goes down, as farmers leave the land or switch to more-compact fruit- or vegetable-growing operations. Most "farmers" actually hold regular jobs in offices and factories, since rice cultivation now takes only about twenty full days of work a year. Many of the people left full-time on the farms are grandfathers and grandmothers without heirs willing to take over the work. As they die or retire, their families do not sell the land—God forbid—but may lend or lease it to neighbors, who can then farm on a larger

and more efficient scale. For half a dozen years the government has been cutting back the annual increase in rice-support prices, and the farmers' union thought it had won a great victory last summer when it merely kept the price from being cut. One agricultural economist, Yoshikazu Kano, even contends that Japanese rice can someday be truly competitive. With better breeding techniques, larger plots, and more highly educated farmers, he says, Japanese growers can match the American price. Of course, until that far-off day, they must be shielded against cut-rate foreign competition.

A few Japanese have attempted a frontal assault. Last fall the *Sankei* newspaper published a front-page article be-

laboring the cost difference between Japanese and California rice. Kenichi Ohmae keeps issuing manifestos, attempting to persuade urban Japanese to complain about the high cost of food and the outrageous price of land. In a society where personal motivations approximated an economist's supply-demand chart, such a campaign might succeed. Indeed, it would never have to be launched. Do Americans need to be persuaded to buy Japanese cameras or watches? Korean or Taiwanese personal computer "clones"? But in a mercantilist society where low-cost consumption carries less weight than other, more subjective values, such a campaign hasn't a chance.

—James Fallows



WASHINGTON VAT IS A BAD IDEA

The deficit crisis has put a national sales tax back on the public agenda. Herewith the case against it

IS A NATIONAL sales tax on the political horizon? A well-financed cadre of corporate lobbyists in Washington, D.C., would like you to think so. With the ink barely dry on the Tax Reform Act of 1986, these men and women have already begun a campaign to enact a new federal tax on consumer spending. Surprisingly, they have found support for the idea among a handful of liberal economics writers.

Technically, what the lobbyists are after is a value-added tax (VAT). This

differs from the more familiar sales taxes imposed by most states in that the tax would be collected at the various stages of the production and sale of goods, not simply on final retail sales. Arguably, this complicated approach might make cheating more difficult, but the key advantage implied is political: the tax would be hidden in the cost of products, rather than added on at the retail cash register.

The corporate promoters of a national sales tax tout it as a potent way to raise revenues not only to reduce the federal budget deficit but also to pay for restoring business tax breaks that the Tax Reform Act curtails. Those who defend a sales tax as a liberal step, among them the MIT economist Lester Thurow, argue that the tax could also finance big increases in public-works and social-welfare programs, as VATs do in many European countries.

There's no doubt that a federal sales

tax could raise quite a lot of money—as much as \$200 billion a year, at a 10 per cent tax rate. But what distinguishes a sales tax from other revenue-raising options, according to its supporters, is that it would be a panacea for the economy. By discouraging consumer spending they claim, it would lead to increased savings, added investment, and an improved trade balance.

If such contentions sound familiar they should. The argument that higher taxes on spending will produce economic miracles is simply the flip side of the tired rationalizations for lower taxes on savings and investment which Congress so recently repudiated and which event have shown to be so wrong.

To begin with, take personal savings. The major expansion of eligibility for individual retirement accounts in 1981 was supposed to produce a big surge in saving. It didn't. Some people may have saved more in response to the increase rate of return that putting money into a IRA offered. But others found that higher after-tax interest rates meant that they could save less and still reach their retirement income goals. As it turned out virtually all the money that flooded into IRAs over the past few years was simply transferred from other kinds of saving. The overall personal savings rate has actually declined since IRA eligibility was expanded.

Will individuals now save more of their money if, because of a national sales tax, they get 10 percent less for goods and services for every dollar they spend? Or will they save less in order to maintain their standard of living? It is worth noting that the two nations with the highest personal savings rate—Italy and Japan—rely the least on consumption taxes to finance their governments.

What about business investment? In 1981 Congress enacted tax breaks that essentially exempted from taxation the profits from new capital investment. The new loopholes were supposed to produce an investment boom, by lowering the cost of capital. But, again, it didn't happen. From 1981 to 1985 the kinds of investment in business equipment that were to be made more attractive grew at only a quarter the rate at which they had grown from 1976 to 1980. Companies did save on taxes but they spent the money on everything but new investment, including increases in dividends, higher executive pay, and a record-breaking wave of giant corporate mergers.

Now the same people who lobbied for the 1981 incentives are back with a new cost-of-capital argument. They say that the added personal savings a sales tax is supposed to produce would provide a bigger pool of capital, at a lower cost, for companies to invest. As already noted, the idea that a sales tax would entice people to save more is dubious at best. But is there really any reason to believe that even if savings were to go up, companies would invest more when customers had to pay 10 percent more for the products they bought? It hardly seems likely. Instead, if a sales tax leads to reduced consumer demand, businesses will almost certainly invest less.

Finally, take trade. Clearly, the 1981 tax breaks for corporate investment have not helped our trade balance. Indeed, the United States has moved from an overall trade surplus in 1981 to recording trade deficits.

Would enactment of a national sales tax do any better at improving the U.S. trade balance? Sales-tax advocates offer a beguiling argument. Since the sales tax would be collected only on goods entering the United States, not on those leaving, they say, the result would be to encourage exports and penalize imports.

There is nothing wrong with this reasoning except that it is totally illogical. Foreign goods imported into the United States would indeed be subject to a national sales tax, but so would U.S. products sold in the United States. Similarly, U.S. exports would be exempt from the U.S. sales tax, but so would the foreign goods they compete with abroad.

By way of analogy: does anyone think that Connecticut businesses enjoy a competitive advantage over New Hampshire ones because Connecticut has a steep sales tax while New Hampshire has none? Of course not.

As for a national sales tax itself, charging a federal sales tax on imported Toyotas would not make Chevrolets more attractive to American consumers, because the same tax would apply to sales of Chevrolets. And rebating the U.S. sales tax on exported Chevrolets would not make them more salable in Japan, since Chevrolets would still be subject to the same Japanese taxes that Toyotas are.

Some sales-tax advocates have advanced an ancillary argument: taking advantage of the current concern over illicit drugs, they claim that a sales tax could cut the pinch on tax-evading drug smugg-

lers—and on the underground economy in general. After all, it is claimed, these income-tax cheats would at least have to pay sales tax when they buy their stretch limos. But the truth is that businesses now evading income taxes could be among the big winners under a new sales tax. People who don't report their sales under the income tax would hardly report them under the sales tax, and that would give them a big price advantage over businesses that honestly pass the sales tax on to consumers.

FALLACIOUS OR NOT, the various economic claims for a national tax on spending will be debated as long as there are economists in need of employment. But the central issue raised by proposals for a federal sales tax is: Who should pay the taxes to support the government?

The 1986 Tax Reform Act was designed to reinvigorate the principle that taxes should be assessed on the basis of the ability to pay them. Tax shelters that have allowed tens of thousands of the country's wealthiest people to pay little or nothing in federal income taxes have been curtailed. Corporate giants with multibillion-dollar earnings will no longer pay less in taxes than the people who work their assembly lines, sweep their floors, or type their letters. The federal government will stop taxing people into poverty. In fact, more than six million poor families have been removed from the income-tax rolls entirely.

But a national sales tax would turn the ability-to-pay principle on its head. Indeed, it would be almost breathtaking in its regressivity.

In late 1984 the Treasury Department released a report that examined what a 10 percent national sales tax would mean to the pocketbooks of various families. A family earning \$15,000, the Treasury found, would pay \$1,250 under such a tax, or 8.4 percent of its income and twice as much as its current federal-income-tax liability. At \$50,000 in earnings, a family would pay about \$2,300 a year, or 4.6 percent of its income and just under half its federal-income-tax bill. But someone making \$500,000 would pay only 1.8 percent of that income in sales tax.

Why would a national sales tax be so unfair? Wouldn't everyone have to pay the same rate of tax on what they spent—or at least on the kinds of spending that are subject to the tax?

Maybe so, but middle- and lower-in-

come families spend a much larger percentage of their incomes than do wealthier families. Indeed, the lowest-income Americans—a group that includes many retired people living on Social Security and tapping their nest eggs, unemployed people borrowing money or drawing on their savings to put food on the table, students using loans to pay their living expenses, and so forth—generally spend considerably more than they earn. The Treasury Department found that people with incomes below \$10,000 would pay 14.2 percent of their earnings in taxes under a 10 percent national sales tax.

In contrast, upper-income people not only save a greater share of their incomes but also spend more on items that could not be subject to a federal sales tax, such as foreign travel and personal services in their homes. Moreover, while the income tax applies to pre-tax earnings, a federal sales tax would be assessed on *after-tax* spending.

The Treasury Department's finding that a 10 percent sales tax would amount to a mere 1.8 percent of income for the richest Americans reflects the fact that, on average, they would pay the tax on just 18 percent of their earnings. For example, someone making \$500,000 might pay 30 percent of his or her income in various federal, state, and local taxes, save about 20 percent, and devote another 30 percent or so to other nontaxable uses, leaving only about 18 percent of that person's income subject to federal sales tax.

Some federal-sales-tax proponents claim that the unfairness of a sales tax could be alleviated by exempting certain kinds of spending from taxation. There is a grain of truth in this contention—but only a grain.

What would happen, for example, if food, home heating, electricity, water, prescription drugs, and houses were exempted from a federal sales tax? Well, the sales tax would need a 40 percent higher rate in order to raise as much revenue as a tax without these exemptions. According to the Treasury study, instead of taxing the poorest families at 14.2 percent of their income and the wealthiest at 1.8 percent of theirs, this revised plan would take 12.5 percent of the income of the poor and 2.4 percent of the income of the rich—hardly a major gain in fairness.

Those who contend that a national sales tax ought to be part of the liberal agenda have argued that regressivity

problems could be solved—indeed, that a sales tax could be made progressive—through a system of direct payments to reimburse lower-income families for their excess tax burdens. Defenders of this approach include Lester Thurow and *The New Republic's* economics correspondent, Robert Kuttner. But although their position that a national sales tax could be made progressive as a share of personal income is supportable arithmetically, practically it is nonsense.

For instance, a federal sales tax could be established at a 50 percent tax rate. At the same time, a system of direct federal grants could be provided, ranging from 71 percent of income for families earning less than \$10,000 down to zero for people making more than \$200,000. On paper this would produce a progressive sales-tax/rebate system. Effective tax rates (net of rebates) would rise gradually with family income, from zero at the bottom up to a top rate of nine percent of income for the wealthiest taxpayers. The average rate and the revenue raised would be about the same as under a 10 percent tax without exemptions or rebates.

But merely describing such a ridiculous taxation system shows how mistaken is the notion that a federal sales tax could reasonably be made progressive. It would require the government to collect almost a trillion dollars a year in sales taxes and pay out three quarters of a trillion dollars in direct grants. Indeed, just to make a federal sales-tax system proportional—that is, to collect five percent of income from all taxpayers—would require a nominal rate of close to 30 percent, along with \$550 billion in sales-tax collections and \$350 billion in rebates.

The implausible scheme just outlined for a progressive sales tax has numerous problems beyond its obvious (and overwhelming) ones. Trying to define income to determine eligibility for sales-tax rebates is an almost impossibly daunting task, as would be administering such a rebate system. When the Treasury Department tried to illustrate how a rebate mechanism could at least exempt the poor from a national sales tax (while keeping the outrageous regressivity at all other income levels), it found itself unable to conceive a method that could even reduce the effective tax rate on low-income families to the average rate for all taxpayers.

Lester Thurow is appealing when he writes, "It is not necessary to construct a

regressive tax system with lower taxes for rich capitalists and higher taxes for the average working person." But when he then promotes a national sales tax, he is giving political cover to those who have no interest in producing a tax that is anything but extremely regressive.

MOST SIGNS SAY that a national sales tax is probably not now in the offing. President Ronald Reagan is against the idea, as he is against all proposed tax increases. Assistant Treasury Secretary Roger Mentz promises flatly that we "will not see a consumption tax in this Administration."

Interest groups on both the left and the right also oppose a federal sales tax, although for quite different reasons. The AFL-CIO rejects the idea because of its regressivity, while New Right organizations see a hidden national sales tax as a money machine that would fuel new federal spending.

On Capitol Hill support for a national sales tax is also thin. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski, of Illinois, a chief architect of the 1986 Tax Reform Act, says that "to ask this nation to pay an additional tax that is neither practical nor fair is bad economics—and lousy politics." Rostenkowski knows what he's talking about when it comes to the politics of a national sales tax: he remembers his predecessor as Ways and Means chairman, the late Al Ullman, whose advocacy of a federal sales tax helped lead to his 1980 defeat in sales-tax-free Oregon.

Last spring another politician from Oregon, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Bob Packwood, endured a storm of criticism from the public when he proposed \$75 billion in federal sales taxes to pay for keeping an equivalent amount of corporate tax breaks in his version of the tax-reform bill, and he quickly dropped the proposal. Since then he has condemned sales taxes as the "most regressive, most unfair kind of tax imaginable."

Even in the business community the idea of a federal sales tax has so far generated little enthusiasm. The retailers, truckers, and highly taxed manufacturers who supported tax reform have no interest in restoring loopholes that allowed other companies to avoid taxes, and they worry that a sales tax could cut into their profits by depressing sales. Even corporations that would like to see tax breaks restored fear that a sales tax

whose main goal was deficit reduction could hurt their earnings.

But with a Congress and a President so mercurial that in the space of just five years they could enact both the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, which created more tax loopholes than any bill in history, and the Tax Reform Act of 1986, which set the record for closing loopholes, anything is possible. Already the American Bar Association is considering drafting a "model" federal sales tax, in case something does develop. And Mobil Oil, which is underwriting some of the corporate lobbying activity on the issue, recently ran nationwide advertisements promoting "the case for a consumption tax."

Sales-tax advocates hope that the political dynamic now tilted against a tax on spending will change under the pressure of continued federal deficits. They even go so far as to claim that passage of the Tax Reform Act has made enactment of a national sales tax more likely. In the old days cracking down on tax dodges might have raised big sums, they say, but the reform bill closed the biggest loopholes to pay for its lower tax rates, not to raise revenues.

Prior to tax reform, however, the same lobbyists were arguing that a new hidden sales tax was needed because the income tax was "worn out"—unable to raise added revenues and lacking in public support precisely because it had been eroded by the loopholes these lobbyists had promoted.

The truth is that far from making a sales tax inevitable, the Tax Reform Act can serve as a framework for raising whatever added revenues are needed. The vastly broadened tax base that the act has produced means that tax increases can be shared fairly, rather than being stuck on those who are unable to find ways to shelter their incomes.

Why not, for instance, consider making the personal tax rates more progressive? For 1987 the individual-rate schedule has five rates: 11 percent, 15 percent, 28 percent, 35 percent, and 38.5 percent. In 1988, however, the rate system is slated to acquire a strange backward bend. The highest rate will be 33 percent, but for those at the very top of the income scale—making more than about \$240,000 a year—the rate drops back to 28 percent. Simply extending the 33 percent tax rate to the richest taxpayers could raise \$10 billion a year. Freezing the 1987 rate schedule for fu

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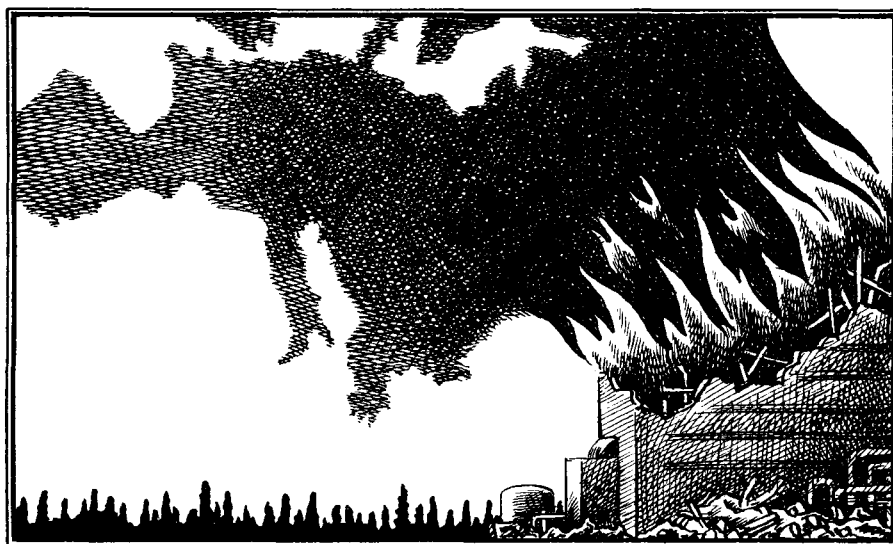
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ture years would raise considerably more. And either change would avoid an unnecessary result of the act whereby half of the nation's richest taxpayers are to receive tax reductions averaging \$50,000 a year, starting in 1988. Moreover, if we are to continue in the spirit of the 1986 reforms, the unfair loopholes that remain in the law—and there are still some costly ones—ought to be closed.

Most important, the newly reformed tax code makes it unnecessary to listen to those who argue that tax increases are possible only by fooling the public with a “hidden” tax. As the sales-tax lobby

gears up for its push to undermine tax reform, Congress and the President should remember their own words, so recently delivered in the debate over the Tax Reform Act, about why fairness in taxation is so important. Dan Rostenkowski, speaking at a conference sponsored by advocates of a national sales tax, put it best: “This country is not unwilling to pay higher taxes—as long as they are fair. If we need more money for government, then let’s go through the front door and collect it from those who can pay—not through the back from those who can’t.”

—Robert S. McIntyre



ITALY LIVING WITH FALLOUT

*An American abroad in Chernobyl's
aftermath confronts the
half-life of truth*

IHAPPENED TO BE living in Rome when the accident at Chernobyl occurred, but, largely because of the accident, I do not live there anymore. As I sought to learn how worried I ought to be about the dose of radiation my family and millions of others had received, I gradually realized that I was also learning ways in which Western European citizens, with far greater access to information than their counterparts to the East, were being misled about radiation's effects on their lives.

The governments of Western Europe, like the Soviet government, had both exclusive access to important informa-

tion and incentives to suppress it. When proof was produced that air radiation in certain parts of France had reached levels some four hundred times greater than normal, the French government suffered a brief embarrassment for having initially denied significant increases in radiation. With 65 percent of its electricity generated by nuclear power—the largest such percentage in the world—France had a great deal at stake. But just exactly how much other governments were willing to censor or minimize or misrepresent data was difficult to guess. As I observed the Italian government weather, quite easily, a domestic scandal about its own deliberate suppression of information—a scandal that never reached the international press—I wondered how many other people in Europe were beginning to worry that an entire continent had been enveloped in a cloud of secrecy.

In the days right after the accident my greatest personal concern, and my husband's, was to decide whether we and our two-year-old daughter should leave

Italy. The possibility of moving first occurred to us on May 2, the day the Italian government announced a two-week ban on the sale of virtually all green vegetables (not merely leafy ones, as in some countries) and on the consumption of milk by pregnant women and children under ten. Although Italy was farther from the accident than most countries in Europe, its government had ordered the most stringent protective measures of any nation on the Continent, and had announced them so promptly that they appeared in the same newspapers that were informing most Italians for the first time of the arrival of “la nube,” or the Chernobyl cloud. Experience told me that Italians rarely agree quickly to do anything, and although I was grateful to be prevented from eating contaminated food, the very efficiency of the ban disturbed me. Perhaps, as some people suggested, the government was overcompensating for the recent “poisoned wine” scandal in which it was widely perceived that a number of the twenty or so deaths could have been prevented if the government had taken prompt action.

Hoping that I was overreacting, I bought two dusty (and thus pre-Chernobyl) twelve-liter cases of long-life milk for my daughter. (Long-life milk, popular in Europe, can be kept unrefrigerated for about four months.) My husband and I decided that we would keep our daughter indoors, with the windows closed, for at least a week—not an easy thing for a two-year-old to accept. May. No one had suggested such a precaution to us. We were merely assuring, because pediatricians were advising against allowing young children to play on grass, that, for now, the less “fresh air” our daughter had, the better.

Although we were living in an increasingly nuclear-powered world, we had also been living in ignorance of the nature of radiation. I did not know that the estimates of the tolerance of humans to radiation exposure, originally based on the effects of Hiroshima, are no longer thought by many radiologists to be at least twice as high as they should be. I did not know that one person might be two or three times as sensitive to the same dose of radiation as another person, or that radioactive elements have different effects, depending on what part of the body absorbs them and how quickly they are excreted.

The newspapers provided some of the information that, I suddenly felt,

should have known already: that iodine comes in a radioactive form, iodine 131, which is often the principal component of nuclear-reactor leaks and which has the relatively brief half-life of eight days. I learned that iodine 131 causes thyroid cancer, that it is readily absorbed by green plants, and, therefore, that it is found in the milk of grass-eating animals. I learned that cesium 137, with a half-life of thirty years, settles especially in muscle tissue and organs, and that strontium 90, with a half-life of twenty-eight years, settles in bones and so can cause bone-marrow cancer.

Almost everyone I knew in Rome had learned at least some of these facts within a few days—a few days not after we learned of the Chernobyl disaster but after we learned that *la nube* had passed over us.

EVEN ALLOWING FOR the human tendency to be most interested in whatever immediately affects us, I was surprised at how little news American sources were providing. I was disappointed, for instance, that the *International Herald Tribune*, which is published in Paris and serves more readers of English than any other newspaper on the continent, devoted little space to Chernobyl after the most “explosive” news was over. And, like other newspapers in France, it did not initially question the French government’s claim of national exemption from Chernobyl’s effects. Meanwhile, some American magazines minimized the fallout, erroneously arguing that the doses of radiation Western Europeans received from Chernobyl were no larger than those resulting from several chest x-rays. Other publications, while justifiably focusing on the damage to Soviet and Eastern European citizens, seemed to dismiss the worries of Germans and Belgians and Austrians and Frenchmen and Italians, whose soil could be contaminated for decades, as a comical anxiety over whether or not to make a salad. “Let them eat cake,” they seemed to be saying.

Theoretically, the best source for Italian news ought to have been Italian newspapers. The one I read most regularly, *Il Messaggero*, gave generally excellent coverage of the continuing local problems stemming from Chernobyl, as did many of Italy’s other dailies. All of them reported that Italy’s air-radiation levels on May 2 had been measured at about twice “background,” or normal. My daughter’s pediatrician told me that

this was nothing to be concerned about. Indeed, he said, he wouldn’t give radiation in Italy another thought until levels reached ten times background.) Then, on May 9, the papers offered a correction of the previous week’s data. Under a headline that read, “THE SKY BY NOW IS ‘CLEAN’—BUT THE FIRST OF MAY IS FEARED A TRUE DISASTER,” *Il Messaggero* revealed that “the radioactivity in northern Italy, in the data of May 2, wasn’t twice background, but, on the contrary, one hundred times.” The director of the Atmospheric Physics Institute (IFA) angrily denied that it had ever provided incorrect figures. Rather, the IFA had been one source of data for the sole body in Italy authorized to release information on radioactivity, the Civil Protection Agency. This agency had arrived at its reassuring figure of twice background by averaging the high radioactivity levels of the north with those of the central and southern regions. The Civil Protection Agency’s director defended himself by arguing that the authorities in Sweden, Austria, and Switzerland had also averaged regional data.

The great variation in radiation levels, not only across Europe’s close national borders but also within countries, had important implications for the many of us who hoped to evaluate Chernobyl’s potential for damage to our own families. We would not be able to rely on the apparently logical generalization that greater distance from the accident meant greater safety. We learned that a number of other factors—such as topography, water currents, and incidence of rainfall—can make a tremendous difference. Only continuing local measurement of radioactive elements in the air, in the soil, and in food would be of much use to the public. In Italy the north was doubly unfortunate, being both the region closest to Chernobyl and the only one in the country experiencing heavy rainfall in May. Newspaper reports differed about how bad the news was in the north, but they all agreed that its soil and its food were generally the most contaminated in the country.

On May 11—this time buried in a middle paragraph on page 3—*Il Messaggero* carried a clarification of the background-radiation discrepancy that I found more disturbing than the May 9 headline. Scientists from the IFA and from the ENEA—the state atomic-energy commission, closely related to the Civil Protection Agency—made a joint

statement that the data they had supplied were not contradictory. The IFA’s “one hundred times background” referred only to *beta* radiation in the air, while the ENEA’s “twice background” referred to the augmentation of *total* radioactivity. *Il Messaggero* did not explain how this new interpretation related to its previous statement that the discrepancy had resulted from averaging regional figures on radiation.

While these baffling interagency battles were being fought in Italy, international battles on safety standards were being fought in the European Community. France threatened to block a ban on meat imports from Eastern Europe unless Italy abandoned its demand that all food imports from Eastern and Western European countries alike bear guarantees of safety. As Europe’s leading exporter of fresh produce, Italy—which was losing some \$3 million daily in revenues on the produce it had volunteered to ban domestically—understandably wanted the burden of such sacrifices to be as fairly distributed as possible. Clearly, although safety was the primary issue for the EC, it was not the only issue. West Germany managed to have East Germany removed from the list of Eastern European countries from which meat imports were banned, by arguing, according to the *International Herald Tribune*, that “radioactivity levels monitored in West Berlin give a good indication of the level of pollution in East Germany.” Reporters for the London *Observer*, who were later to publish a book about Chernobyl, *The Worst Accident in the World*, interpreted that “good indication” of pollution this way: “East Germany, although it was just as vulnerable to radioactive contamination [as other Eastern European countries], was mysteriously omitted from the list at the insistence of West Germany, which values its trading links with its eastern counterpart.” As the *Observer* reporters noted, the technical reason for East Germany’s omission was that it lies more than 1,000 kilometers from Chernobyl. Yet Austria, which lies partly inside the 1,000 kilometer limit, escaped the ban as well.

Internationally conflicting standards for radiation limits in food, most set long before Chernobyl, were also making any objective appraisal of the damage extremely difficult. Only when the World Health Organization published a report on Chernobyl late in May did ordinary citizens discover just how widely

the guidelines varied. Nor did they vary along easily predictable political lines.

The rate at which radioactive emissions occur is measured by most countries in becquerels (or bq). Allowable limits of radiation in milk, for instance, were high in Eastern-bloc countries (1,000 bq per liter in Czechoslovakia and Poland), but two of the countries that shared the highest limit, 2,000 bq per liter, were Bulgaria and Sweden. (That fact is even more surprising when one considers that, following a 1980 referendum, Sweden committed itself to phasing out its nuclear reactors—which currently provide more than 30 percent of its electricity—by the year 2010.) Many countries, including the United States and Italy, set limits at about 500 bq per liter, but one of the most protective limits, 200 bq per liter, was set by Finland, which was widely suspected of having publicly minimized the contamination it had suffered from Chernobyl.

All of these limits are far below any level that would lead to acute radiation sickness. As the WHO report observed, and scientists generally agree, an exposure threshold exists for acute radiation sickness but not for other effects of radiation. These include mental retardation of fetuses; genetic defects, which may appear in one or two generations; and cancer. Even the slightest additional exposure to radiation increases one's chances of incurring such effects, and among the questions implicit in the varying "allowable" radiation limits is *how many* extra cancers a government is prepared to accept as likely before it orders protective measures or evacuation.

Inevitably, given the complexity of the information and the intensity of the fears Chernobyl was unleashing, a number of adaptive psychological strategies emerged. Some people were especially frightened of radiation's effects precisely because these were invisible. Others seemed truly to believe that what you can't see can't hurt you. Indeed, some suggested that the greatest danger radiation poses is psychological. As demonstrations calling for a nuclear shutdown in Italy drew impressive crowds, the *Corriere della Sera* commented: "Paradoxically, the nuclear psychosis seems to be greater in those countries where there are fewer reactors, especially in Italy, where only three are in operation." And, manifesting another philosophy closely related to the disdain of "nuclear

psychosis," *La Repubblica* commented that a "colossal disinformation" and "propaganda" campaign in the United States "corresponded" to the Soviets' handling of the disaster. The most reliable index of how fearful—or at least uncertain—most people remained was provided at the marketplace: the wholesale prices of produce, including fruits and vegetables that had never been banned, were on some days down by as much as 50 percent.

PERHAPS IF THE levels of ground radiation in the north of Italy had not remained stubbornly high for weeks, and even suddenly and mysteriously *risen* in June, the government's original two-week ban on vegetables and milk would have seemed prudent enough. After all, Italy had applied stringent immediate



controls on its own food; it had even restricted imports from other European Community members until they had agreed to meet higher health standards. Yet, as *Il Messaggero* reported in early May, readings specifically breaking down the amounts of cesium, cobalt, and strontium in the environment were being supplied to the Civil Protection Agency but were not being made public. "Now would be the time," the article said, "to know with certainty in what degree vegetables, milk, and rain-water remain contaminated by these elements."

The newspaper to raise the question of public disclosure most loudly and most often, however, was *The International Courier*, the only English daily newspaper published in Italy at the time. (It closed down, unfortunately, later in the summer, and had it done so

before Chernobyl, I am sure that many foreign residents in Italy would never have known the extent to which the accident had touched their lives.) Two reporters, Kate Casa and William McCaughey, continued throughout May and into June to write front-page stories on the effects of Chernobyl in Europe, and particularly in northern Italy. They repeatedly pointed out that the single element for which the Italian government was releasing specific readings was iodine 131—which had originally been the greatest component of Chernobyl's fallout. But iodine 131, which has an eight-day half-life, was also the component quickest to fade away. Government officials argued that as soon as levels of iodine 131 returned to somewhere near normal, Chernobyl's potential danger for Italy was at an end. The government's initially alarming two-week ban on iodine-absorbing greens and milk began to seem not only a necessary precaution but also a psychologically astute way of forestalling public concern about the contamination of vegetables, grain, meat, and other foods by elements with half-lives decades long. On May 15 the *International Courier* reported that the ENEA had refused to release figures on levels of cesium and strontium in food. But without specific data, how were citizens to be reassured that the safety standards that Italy was demanding of other countries were being met domestically?

On May 16 the *Courier* reported interviewing some anonymous scientists at the ENEA about the organization's failure to release data on cesium. "Contact the universities," one of them advised. "They are not restrained the way we are." Another said, "We are charged by the state to elaborate whatever data they want us to." The next day, May 17, Casa and McCaughey reported that a "reliable government source" had divulged to the Lega Ambiente, or Environmental League, some disturbing information: in vegetables harvested in the north of Italy on May 12, levels of cesium 137 were *60 percent above those allowed by Italian law*. Faced with explaining the damaging data, the ENEA and the Civil Protection Agency—both government institutions—each referred reporters to the other organization.

Ironically, May 17 was also the day that the Italian government declared all vegetables safe and legally marketable. It decided, however, to extend by one week the ban on consumption of milk by pregnant women and children. The

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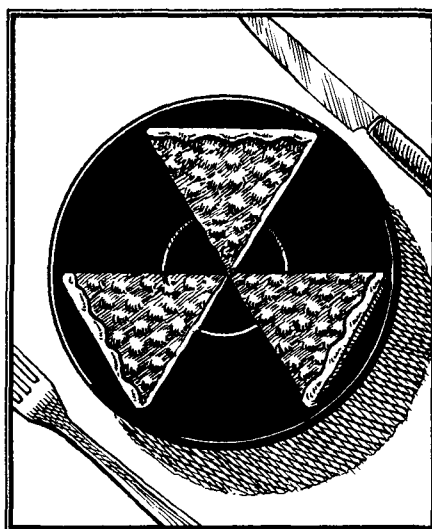


Minister of Agriculture offered the explanation that "we have chosen to put health above everything else." But when Casa and McCaughey again questioned the withholding of figures on cesium, a Civil Protection Agency spokesman replied, "What do you want with those figures? By now the damage is done. Whatever cesium there was has been absorbed into our bodies. We'll see the long-term effects only after many years."

On May 18, the day after Italians happily returned to their greengrocers, newspapers around the country reported another environmental setback. The Alps were registering high levels of radioactivity. "Polluted ice, greatly contaminated wildlife," lamented *Il Messaggero*. "The eastern Alps, from Friuli to Lombardy, risk spending the next few months under the threat of an environmental catastrophe." Scientists feared the eventual contamination of drinking water. The northern province of Bolzano closed all hunting reserves, advised the destruction of the livers of animals already caught (because the liver and other soft organs absorb cesium), and recommended waiting two months before eating the animals' meat. Meanwhile, one of Italy's largest long-life-milk manufacturers was under questioning for allegedly having falsified the production dates stamped on milk cartons. Milk that was ostensibly "pre-Chernobyl" had been registering suspiciously high levels of iodine 131.

Yet the milk scandal was soon upstaged. The Ministry of Agriculture, which, because it "put health above everything else," had just recommended that the government extend the milk ban, now announced that much of the milk supposedly destroyed had actually been reserved for a fifteen-day holding period and was being recycled as long-life milk and yogurt. We had seen photographs of piles of boxes of green vegetables at "destruction centers," but many green vegetables, we now learned, had also been saved and were to be sold frozen, now that their iodine 131 content was substantially reduced. (Several days before, health officials in southern Germany had seemed to be preparing for just such a contingency when they banned the consumption of imported frozen vegetables by children.) "We're trying to throw out as little as possible and reutilize as much as possible," a Ministry of Agriculture spokesman said.

Then, on May 24, Prime Minister Bettino Craxi made a declaration that implied that a kind of peace treaty had been signed with radioactivity. "The situation has returned to normal," he announced. "In facing a new situation we were very prudent. . . . But permit me to observe that today there is no reason to be more prudent than prudence itself." He criticized the "unjustified alarmism" of those who continued to advise against buying certain foods, and he lifted the final ban on milk. His declaration was, of course, front-page news in all Italian newspapers. But the *International Courier*—which most Italians had never read, and which was not always available outside Rome—gave greater space to a World Health Organization report on the effects of Chernobyl upon Europe. Italian data on the levels of var-



ious radioactive substances was conspicuously spotty. The government labeled the international report "confidential" and refused to release its contents immediately, adding that it was being held for "a few days" for "minor typographical corrections." After more than a week a Ministry of Health spokesman announced a plan to "publish the report in its entirety, prefaced by comments of a panel of experts." "This is a document written for experts in scientific terms," he said, and he added the apparently calming reassurance that levels of cesium would become less "significant" in about sixty days. But the fallout was merely dispersing—not disappearing.

Those who actually read them found that the "confidential" conclusions of the WHO report were generally, if guardedly, optimistic: "Based on [UN] assessments of the consequences of the

nuclear fallout, the cesium contamination outside the USSR is not likely to cause any serious problems. However, since cesium 137 dominates the long-term exposure, it will not be possible to assess the overall impact . . . unless the distribution of cesium 137 deposition is better known."

At least one Italian was reading the *Courier*: Francesco Rutelli, the chairman of the Radical Party caucus in the Chamber of Deputies, who announced on May 27 that on the basis of the newspaper's disclosures he was initiating a parliamentary investigation into why the Ministry of Health had delayed release of the WHO document and refused to release the levels of any radioactive element other than iodine 131. Meanwhile the *Courier* reported a grave inconsistency in data once again. A spokesman at the ENEA claimed that cesium had "never" been higher anywhere in Italy than two nanocuries per liter of milk and ten nanocuries per kilogram of vegetables. (Italy measures radiation not in becquerels but in nanocuries, one of which is equal to thirty-seven becquerels.) But, as the *Courier* went on,

a confidential May 19 ENEA report shows cesium 137 rose to 24.3 nanocuries per kilogram in northern Italian leafy vegetables on one day alone, May 9. Italian law sets cesium warning levels at 20 nanocuries for a full year for adults, and 6.6 nanocuries over the same period for children under 5 years.

While refusing to comment further, a spokesman for the Prime Minister admitted that Craxi had had access to the May 19 report before declaring that the situation had returned to normal.

Although the emergency was over as far as the national government was concerned, not all communities agreed, and soon another embarrassing contradiction to Craxi's claim came to light. On June four communities in the northern province of Lombardy announced that ground readings of cesium 137 had measured up to five times as high as those in mid-May (which themselves had been high, having been made after the Chernobyl cloud's arrival). The communities reinstated the milk ban and ordered the slaughter of all rabbits (rabbit meat is popular food in northern Italy). The local health agency in Como "invited citizens to refrain from eating chicken rabbits, or the eggs of fowl that feed on vegetation. The Minister of Health Costante Degan, claimed that the up

surge of radioactivity was probably caused by an increase in rainfall and was a purely "local phenomenon." His statement may well have been accurate, but it could not make any safer the milk, vegetables, chicken, and eggs that had been consumed in Lombardy since May 24, when the Prime Minister had declared the situation normal. And if rain could produce such great increases in contamination, Craxi's exhortation to resume normal eating habits may indeed have been hasty. Many individuals and organizations, including at least one labor union, declared that what was needed was a more effective system of information and protection, beginning, above all, with the separation of those institutions that acquire and interpret data on radioactivity from those charged with producing and promoting nuclear power.

BY JUNE 3, THE day of the new milk ban in the north, my husband and I had joined the unjustified alarmists, and had given our landlord notice that we would be leaving Italy within a month. We had plenty of reasons to be chastising ourselves. If the food, air, and soil in Italy had really been dangerous enough to justify our private evacuation, then we should have made it earlier. Instead, we had spent weeks acquiring the rudiments of the vocabulary we needed in order to ask the right questions. And we appeared to be leaving Italy just as it was becoming—especially in Rome, where almost no rain had fallen since Chernobyl—a much safer place to live. The government claimed that its ban on vegetables and milk had reduced by two thirds the probable future incidence of "extra" cancers in Italy. And we had imposed on ourselves a far stricter diet than the government had ever suggested.

Not only our daughter but also my husband and I had given up all fresh dairy products on May 2, and we would not eat them again for nearly two months. We ate only those fresh vegetables and fruits that can be peeled, such as potatoes, carrots, eggplant, apples, and bananas. Although most strawberries in Italy are grown in greenhouses, we—like many other people—decided not to eat them, because we couldn't be sure where they had come from. When we read that young meats such as veal and spring lamb might register higher levels of radioactivity, we gave them up too. We ate frozen spinach until we learned

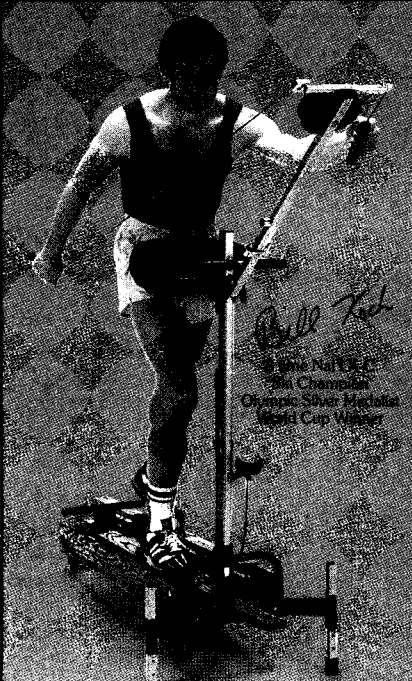
that contaminated greens were being recycled. We relied heavily on fish (except freshwater fish) and chicken: poultry was all right, the newspaper assured us, as long as it had "been raised on uncontaminated, stored feed." But how on earth were we to know? In Italy, once an eater's paradise, we felt as limited in our choice of foods as if we had lived in, say, Russia, before Chernobyl. This was definitely not *la dolce vita*.

Yet, having imposed such restrictions on ourselves, we were probably as safe as anyone in Italy, and could easily have stayed on, eventually adding the formerly restricted foods to our diet and restricting ourselves on new ones—like next year's beef and next year's grain. Grain . . . *pasta*. The thought of pasta, that quintessentially Italian staple, being tainted was so depressing that one could almost see the reasoning behind—if not the decency of—keeping figures on radioactivity secret.

I cannot say that I left Rome because the information I received convinced me that my child's remaining there was dangerous. No expert on radiation or on Italian politics, I was a foreign resident doing my best to interpret the information that was available from Italian news sources at the time. I left largely because the information that had trickled down from the Italian government was so piecemeal, tardy, hard-won, and sometimes provably erroneous that I had not been convinced that my child was *not* in danger. And I am still not convinced. As recently as October, *La Repubblica* reported that two independent sources warned of the continuing contamination of food in Italy—and implicitly raised the question of the quality of food elsewhere in Europe. *Nuova Ecologia*, an environmentalist monthly, concluded from its own research that certain grains, meats, fish, and mushrooms in the north of Italy remain highly radioactive. And researchers at the University of Milan found that the powdered milk in various baby formulas being sold in Italy was so "significantly contaminated" by cesium as to require an "urgent intervention by health authorities."

One can live with moderate fallout indefinitely in total ignorance. Knowing that one is living with it can—in certain people, at least—lead to a despair not only about the health of one's children but also about the future of the human race. If that is the "nuclear psychosis," I still have it.

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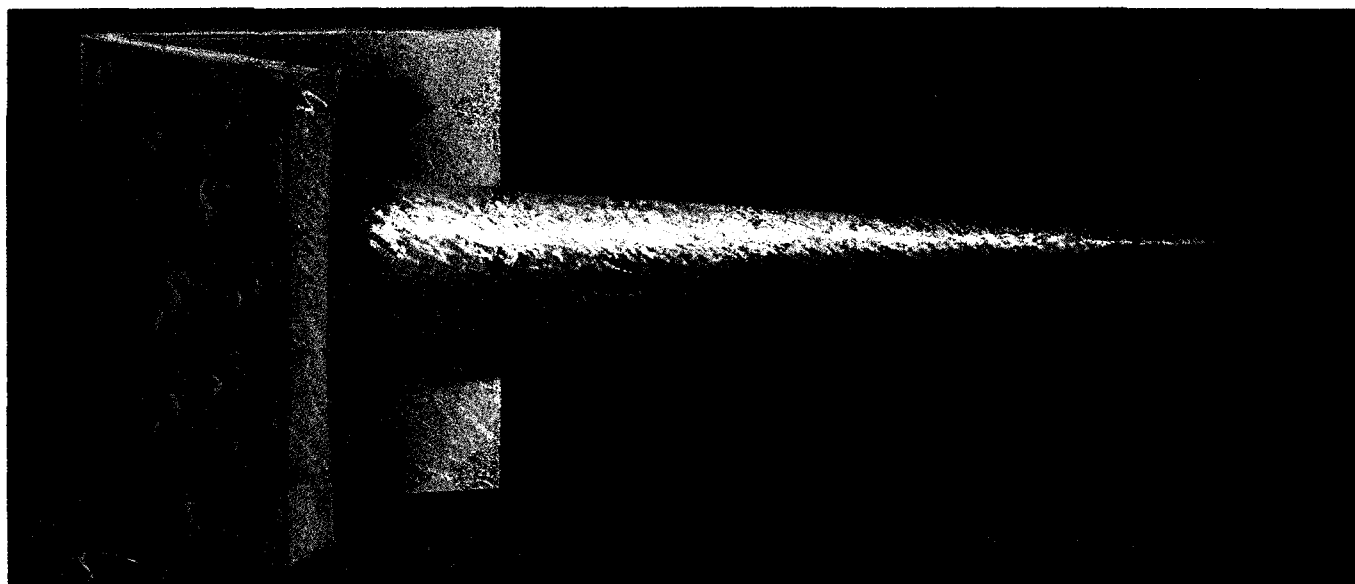
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THE ANNOTATED CURIOUS GEORGE by *Jacques Derrida*. As a primate, George

straddles the line between “chaos” and “meaning,” but what is he doing when he puts too much soap in the washing machine? We know that he is “making a mess,” but Mr. Derrida suggests that he is “making a text” as well. Here is the pre-linguistic troublemaker at his mischievous best. (525 pages, with a foreword by Koko.)

THE NAME OF PETE ROSE by *Umberto Umberto*, translated by *Joe Garagiola*. Descend into a medieval world of hermeneutics and double plays. Umberto provides a serious lesson in semiotics, as well as countless batting and fielding tips.

Divided into the eighteen innings of a twi-night double header at Shea, this “Po-mo” masterpiece begins by taking an entertaining behind-the-scenes look at “Charlie Hustle” in nine typical at-bats. Chapter One, “In which the bases are loaded, and that is all,” and Chapter Two, “In which Mr. Rose is caught looking, and strikes out,” start us off rather slowly. But one's inevitable fear—that this is going to be a pitchers' duel—is put to rest in Chapter Three, “In which Mr. Rose, after taking three outside pitches, slams a change-up to left center, and, after being called out at third, invokes the name of the Antichrist and is suspended from play.”

Then things take a strange turn. Chapter Four, “In which a discourse fol-

lows on the unlikelihood of the umpire's longevity,” and Chapter Five, “In which there is something about an Aqua Velv man,” speed the novel toward evidence that the author's grand vision reaches well beyond this double header—to the terrifying center of a dark mystery about the very nature of the National League itself. Semioticians in particular will appreciate Chapter Fifteen, “In which Mr. Rose gets the green light to swing away but, in misinterpreting the signs, offends the third-base coach. Then there is a fight.”

The book also includes an epilogue “In which we encounter the enigmatic figure of Yogi, a Yoo Hoo man, who declares that the ball game is not only not over until it is over—but it is also *never* over.” (442 pages, with illuminations.)

MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD by *Pete Welton-Cook*. This remarkable first novel is written from the point of view of a pe writing a novel titled—you guessed it—*Mightier Than the Sword*. At first it appears that we are concerned with two separate novels, but when the pen addresses the author directly, we sense that something wonderfully post-modern is afoot.

The core of the novel consists of touching and valuable dialogue between the author and his unwilling pen, but the action explodes when the hithert deferential pen, having in the course c

*where applicable

the novel developed a sense of self-esteem, boldly decides to take a break, triumphantly marking time with periods and commas until the end of the chapter. After this victory the pen refuses to form semicolons or commas—or conjunctions of any sort—reducing the prose to a series of simple sentences, and thereby cleverly accelerating the pace of the novel to its abrupt ending, seven pages later. (57 pages.)

¡HOLA, BUZZY!: Memoirs of an Argentine Insect by *Tomás Yrastórcé*. In this revealing portrait Yrastórcé gives us another in the long tradition of picaresque heroes—although unusually small and with a thorax—and makes use of the tremendous narrative scope afforded a fly, which in this book takes us from the gorgeous boudoir of Eva Peron to the twitching rump of a frisky horse grazing on the pampas.

One is inevitably reminded of Julio Cortazar's novel *Hopscotch*, whose pages can be "shuffled" and read in any order the reader pleases. Yrastórcé's pages, however, can be not only "shuffled" but also rolled into balls and "juggled." Later they can be combined into eye-catching shapes, and "fondled." Eventually they may be incorporated into a large paper raft, which, with some caulking and a basic understanding of ocean currents, may be used to re-enact the *Ra* expedition of Thor Heyerdahl. (320 pages, with sunscreen and flare gun.)

VEAL FUSELAGE by *Giovanni Tomanioni*. This one brings into question the very notion of "book," made as it is of large steel girders and fur—and it renders all but meaningless the standard "book questions" having to do with character development and plot line, let alone issues of "translation" and "paperback ights."

Despite a simple appearance, the book's narrative structure is phenomenally complex: each girder corresponds to an exit on the Jersey Turnpike, with graffiti spray-painted in the "style" of that exit. The author seems to be tipping his hat to Joyce, particularly in the girders that begin, "Dear Mr. Joyce . . ." Other girders reveal various and disparate influences, such as Picasso's blue period, Handel's *Messiah*, the outfielding techniques of the three Alou brothers, the Green Giant jingle—and, inevitably, the forearms and eyelids of Julie Nixon Eisenhower. (25 girders, with ollbooth.) □

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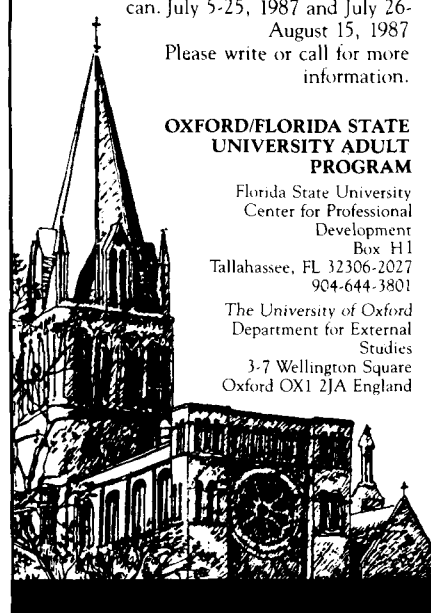
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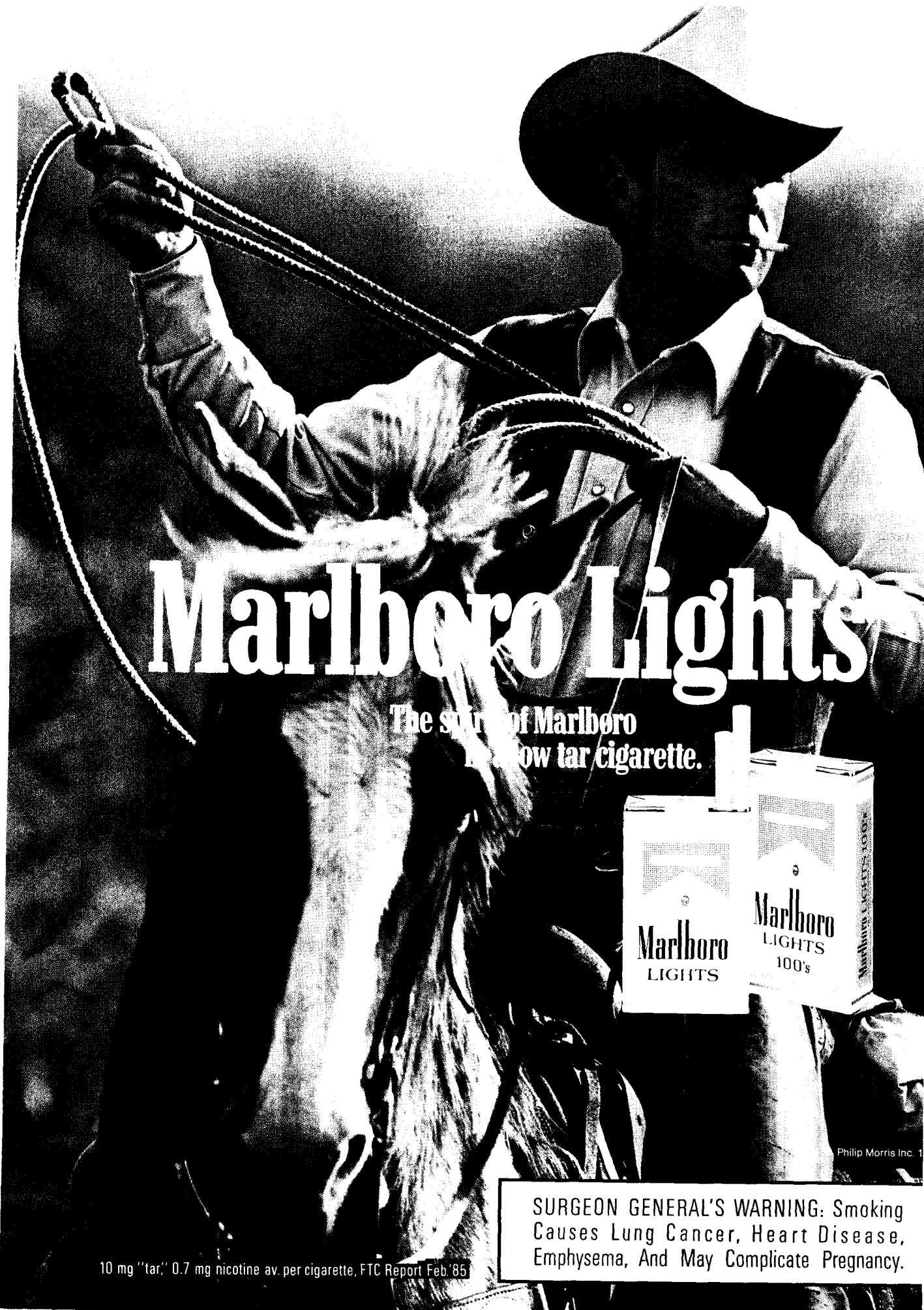
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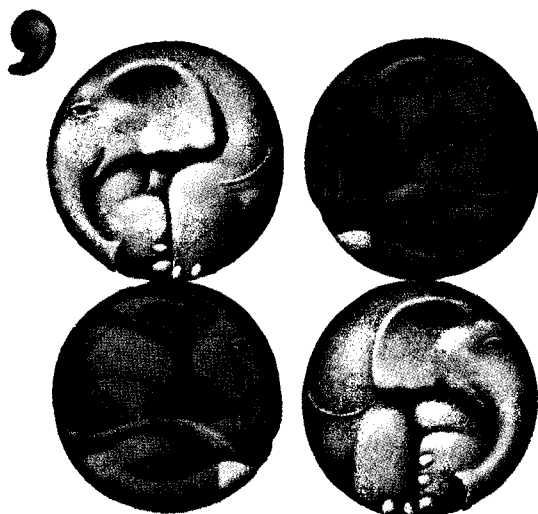
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An analysis of the forces at work in both parties which have dramatically altered the political landscape over the past twenty years—how they brought Ronald Reagan to power and how they will influence the race to succeed him in 1988

THE NEW SHAPE OF AMERICAN POLITICS

BY WILLIAM SCHNEIDER



The Reagan Legacy

AFTER SIX YEARS IN OFFICE RONALD REAGAN HAS changed everything about American politics except ideology. Democrats and Republicans agree that Reagan has transformed the agenda, but in a peculiar way. We want to do the same things as before—stabilize the economy, protect the poor and the elderly, fight drug abuse—only with less government. Public opinion, however, hasn't shifted to the right. If anything, the voters have moved slightly to the left since Reagan took office—there is less support for military spending, more support for domestic social programs, increased concern about arms control, hunger, and poverty. Why hasn't there been a discernible conservative shift in public opinion? Because the impact of the Reagan revolution is more likely to be felt in the long run than in the short run. The President has not, after all, dismantled the New Deal welfare state. As Hugh Heclo, of Harvard University, writes in *Perspectives on the Reagan Years*, "Much as F.D.R. and the New Deal had the effect of conserving capitalism, so Reaganism will eventually be seen to have helped conserve a preeminently status quo, middle-class welfare state."

Fair enough, but in the same volume Jack A. Meyer, of the American Enterprise Institute, in what he calls "a long-term perspective," offers a different view of the Reagan legacy. "The administration seems to highlight its so-

cial philosophy toward federal programs, an area where most of its accomplishments seem rather marginal. By contrast, it downplays and is defensive about its *fiscal policies* which, while incomplete, herald a major accomplishment for the administration." That accomplishment was to "pull the revenue plug" on the federal government. First came the 1981 tax cut, and then year after year of record budget deficits. Now and for the foreseeable future everything the federal government does must accommodate to one central fact: there is less money.

The President sold his tax and budget policies as a means to an end: curbing inflation and restoring the nation's economic stability. From the public's point of view they did just that. But tax cuts, budget deficits, and tax reform are no longer passing items on the political agenda. They form the basis of a new institutional order that will set the terms of political debate far beyond the Reagan years.

One element in this new institutional order is the restoration of confidence in the presidency. "Many close observers of the Washington scene and system saw Reagan as a media success who would be overwhelmed by the immense substantive and managerial demands of the presidency," Richard P. Nathan, of Princeton University, writes. ("An amiable dunce" in the words of one insider.) Writing before the Iran fiasco, Nathan concluded that

"Reagan's abilities . . . have restored a belief that an extraordinary, but mortal, person can give leadership and a sense of direction to the American national government." The crisis over covert U.S. arms sales to Iran is the strongest test yet of that achievement. The President will end up either "out of it" and overwhelmed by the issue or "above it all" and therefore able to draw on the reserves of confidence he has built up over six years.

Another element in this new institutional order is the new coalition structure that the Reagan revolution has given to American politics. Reagan brought together a variety of interests united by a distaste for big government. That coalition is not only larger than the traditional Republican Party but also more diverse. It includes business interests and middle-class voters who dislike taxes and regulation. It includes racial and religious conservatives who dislike the reformist social agenda embraced by the federal government in the 1960s, as well as neo-conservatives who want a tougher foreign policy.

Benjamin Ginsberg and Martin Shefter, of Cornell University, have analyzed how the Reagan Administration has "reconstituted" American politics. Some groups, for example, have changed their political identity. Middle-income urban and suburban voters who used to see themselves as beneficiaries of government programs now identify themselves as "taxpayers, individuals whose chief concern is the cost of federal programs." Groups that used to have a common interest, such as public-sector and private-sector professionals, have been divided by the Reagan program. The Reagan revolution has also created new political forces by uniting disparate interests: for example, Catholic and Protestant religious conservatives, upper-income managers and professionals, big business and small business.

What keeps the Reagan coalition together is not affection or agreement but the perception of a common threat. The threat is that liberals will regain control of the federal government and use it, as they have in the past, to carry out their "redistributionist" or "reformist" or "anti-military" program. The threat will not disappear when Reagan leaves office, and neither will the Reagan coalition—not even if it loses the 1988 election. A coalition may be defeated, as Reagan's was in the 1986 Senate elections, but that does not mean it has been destroyed. In the short run the Republicans are likely to lose many elections, just as the Democrats did over the fifty-year history of their New Deal coalition. The short-term fate of the Republican Party is highly dependent on the condition of the economy. That is what brought the party to power in 1980 and kept it in power in 1984. A major recession would spell the end of Republican rule. But the Reagan coalition would dissolve only if the various groups that compose it no longer felt they had a common interest in limited government. The Republicans are now the party of a weak government and a strong state, attracting people who are committed to one or both objectives. The Reagan revolution, not just Reagan himself, has acquired a popular constituency.

Passion and Pragmatism

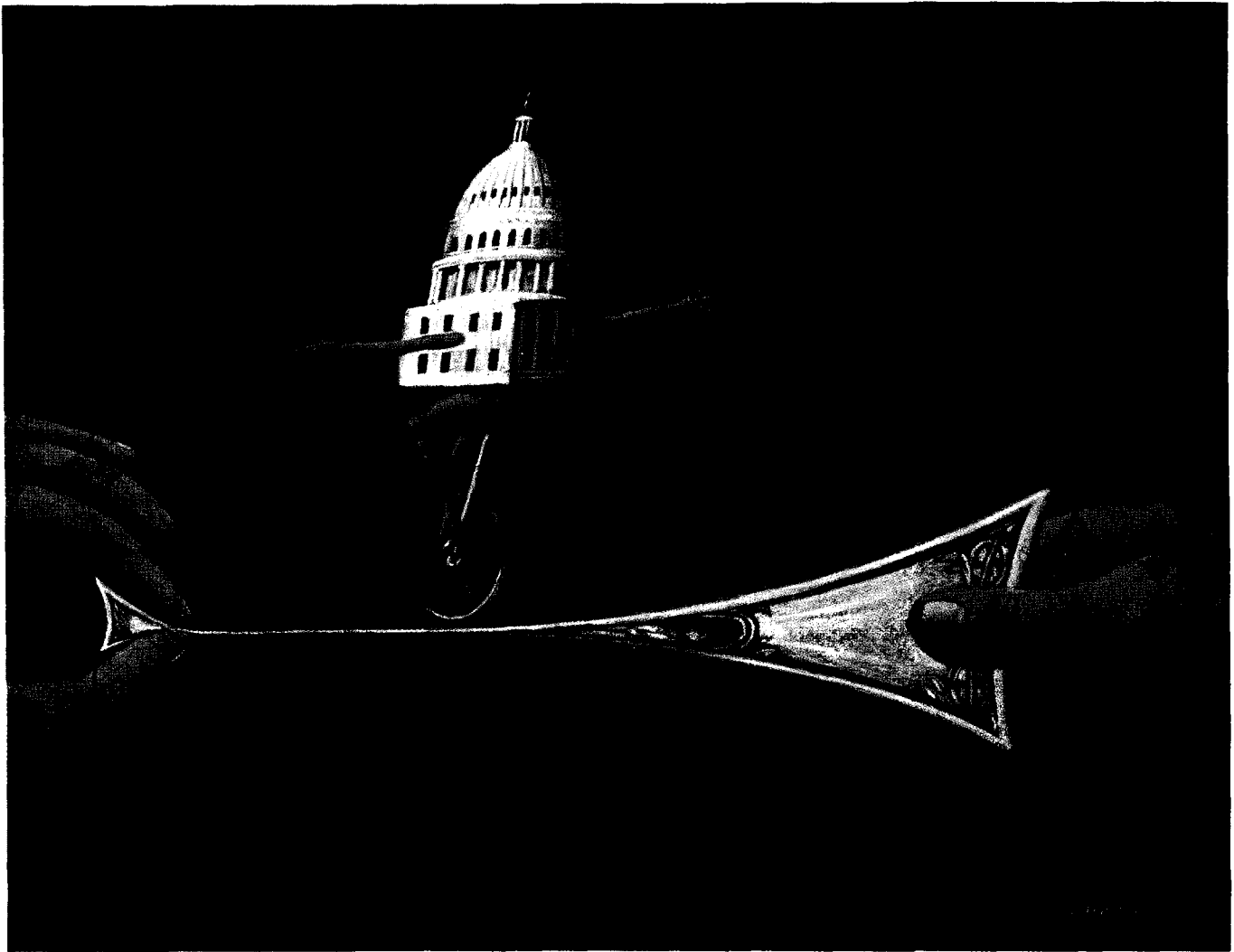
THERE ARE TWO SIDES TO POLITICS, THE PASSIONATE and the pragmatic. The passionate side involves values, loyalties and commitments, issues of right and wrong, conflicts between "us" and "them." Passions are embedded in institutions—the conservative movement, the Republican Party—and so they tend to persist over the long run. The passionate side of politics is where the effects of the Reagan revolution have been most deeply felt. Reaganism has had little effect, however, on pragmatic politics—the procedures of governing and the strategies for getting elected and re-elected. Reagan did not challenge the rules of the game. He mastered them. That is why the impact of the Reagan revolution is so hard to detect in the short run.

Howard Baker, the former Senate majority leader, who was responsible for shepherding most of the Reagan program through Congress, told me recently, "Reagan has been very much an establishment President. He has worked well with the government, with the Congress, and with the executive departments. Unlike President Carter, Reagan is a real pro. . . . Every Tuesday morning at ten o'clock I used to sit in the Cabinet Room with the congressional leadership and the President. It was a good give and take. It was traditional American politics." Reagan's mode of governing—pragmatic, cautious, moderate—has not suggested any revolutionary intent.

Nor have his campaigns. Every presidential election offers voters two kinds of choice. The first is a pragmatic choice, a referendum on the performance of the incumbent party or candidate: Do I approve or disapprove of the way the government is being run? The other choice is passionate, a contest of ideologies: Which candidate is close to my beliefs and values?

In 1980 Jimmy Carter tried to keep the campaign focused on the ideological decision. He described the election in his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention as "a stark choice between two men, two parties, two sharply different pictures of what America is and what the world is. . . . It's a choice between two futures." Reagan emphasized the pragmatic nature of the voters' decision, the election as a referendum on the past and present rather than the future. "Are you better off than you were four years ago?" Reagan asked in his closing statement at the debate one week before the election. "Is it easier for you to go and buy things in the stores than it was four years ago? Is there more or less unemployment in the country than there was four years ago? Is America as respected throughout the world as it was?" Those questions are certainly relevant to the voting decision. But they are not ideological. By recasting the election as a referendum on the incumbent rather than an ideological decision, Reagan attracted vast numbers of voters during the final week of the campaign.

The 1984 election was won by the incumbent for the same reason that the 1980 election was lost by the incumbent.



bent—performance. President Reagan had done the two things he had been elected to do. He had curbed inflation and restored the nation's military security. Reagan's campaign never got much more ideological than "It's morning in America." Democrats like Walter Mondale, Edward Kennedy, Jesse Jackson, and Mario Cuomo railed against the underlying values of Reaganism, to no avail. The voters followed their commonsense instinct—"You don't quarrel with success."

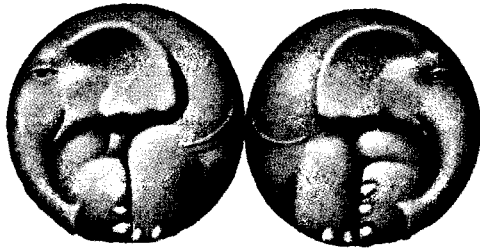
A conventional explanation of Reagan's electoral success, one especially popular among Democrats, is the Great Communicator theory. "I was no good on the mastery of modern communications," Walter Mondale told me. "We've got to learn how to communicate. We've got to know how to lift people. It's a mysterious process. We need people who can play in that arena."

Reagan can certainly play in that arena, and it has been crucial to his success—but not because he does better on television than most Democrats. Reagan's relaxed, reassuring television style is important because his ideological image is neither relaxed nor reassuring. He used television in 1980 to persuade the voters—during the last week of the campaign—that he was not dangerous or extreme, de-

spite the dangerous and extreme things he was on record as having said. Millions of angry, dissatisfied voters felt it was safe to replace Carter with Reagan. A man with such a nice, avuncular personality would not blow up the world.

The point is that Reagan's television style is crucial *for him*, because of the special problems he has as a candidate. It counteracts the divisiveness of his ideology. But one can hardly imagine less effective television performers, or less congenial personalities, than Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Jimmy Carter, and yet they managed to get elected. And for all his skill as a communicator, the polls make it clear that if Reagan had run for re-election under the conditions that prevailed in 1982, when it was definitely not "morning in America," just about any Democrat would have beaten him.

Thus the most ideological President in American history was elected and re-elected in circumstances that were largely devoid of ideology. That is why analysts could find little evidence of a conservative swing in the electorate, either in 1980 or in 1984. People weren't really voting for conservatism. In 1980 they were voting for change. In 1984 they were voting for continuity.



The Two Reagans

REAGAN CAMPAIGNED AS A PRAGMATIST AND HAS GOVERNED as a pragmatist. In the long run, however, he set in motion a transformation of our values and priorities—the passions of politics. He did this by avoiding ideological confrontations. To carry out its long-range objectives, the Administration concentrated on short-run effectiveness. It was a brilliant strategy, and it worked.

It worked because Ronald Reagan has two different political personalities. His rhetoric is that of the hard-core conservative ideologue, a bold and uncompromising man of principle who portrays every issue as a confrontation between “us” and “them.” But his actions are those of a shrewd, practical politician, maneuvering for political advantage and accepting the best deal he can get. When it is useful, Reagan abandons his harsh rhetoric and speaks soothingly in terms of unifying values and symbols. Sometimes he even seems to abandon his principles, as when he accepted a tax increase in 1982 or when he reversed himself in early 1986 and facilitated the departure of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, or, most troublesomely, when he violated his own Administration’s anti-terrorist policy by secretly selling arms to Iran.

In balancing, for the most part, two often contradictory political personalities, Reagan resembles his acknowledged political hero, Franklin D. Roosevelt, in whom the historian James MacGregor Burns found a similar duality, in his *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox*. When Reagan was elected President in 1980, many Americans were frightened by his rhetoric. His economic policies sounded harsh and threatening, his social policies divisive, and his foreign policies reckless. It is a mark of how desperate the country felt that we elected Reagan President despite those reservations. We don’t usually elect ideological candidates. We often *admire* figures like Barry Goldwater, George McGovern, George Wallace, and Jesse Jackson, because they are not typical politicians. They say what they believe. But we usually elect centrists and compromisers like Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Jimmy Carter.

As it turned out, Reagan was not a typical ideologue. Saying what he believed gave him the image of strength and conviction. That was important: it distinguished Reagan from his predecessor. But by seldom carrying through on his more controversial statements, he convinced the voters that he was not really dangerous. The public’s response to Reagan from 1981 to 1986 was one of steadily increasing reassurance. Few voters feel threatened by him anymore. They no longer believe that he will start a war, or

dismantle the Social Security system, or create mass unemployment. Many right-wingers say that Reagan has failed to implement a true conservative program. They are right. It would be bad politics.

Reagan was no different as governor of California. He raised taxes, liberalized the abortion law, and increased welfare payments. At the same time, he denounced the tax system, abortion, and welfare cheaters. Every year as President he attacks Congress for not keeping spending under control. Then he signs a budget compromise into law, with the result being ever higher federal deficits. He once called the Soviet Union an “evil empire” whose leaders are willing to lie and cheat to gain an advantage, but later described Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev as “just as sincere as we are” in his commitment to peace. Neo-conservatives become enraged when Reagan talks a tough line on foreign policy and then fails to act on it, as was the case after the Soviet destruction of the Korean Air Lines passenger jet in 1983 and after the Beirut hostage crisis in 1985. The Administration’s covert policy of providing arms to Iran was another source of consternation to hardliners, if not to the entire world. Here was the President saying one thing—don’t negotiate with terrorists, boycott countries that support terrorism—while surreptitiously doing another.

Look at what happened in Lebanon. We paid a tragic price to learn that our peacekeeping mission was not working. Reagan then did exactly what Lyndon Johnson did not do in Vietnam. He withdrew American troops. He did so because it was good sense—and good politics. Reagan has avoided using American troops in Central America for the same reason. That, most Americans believe, would not be good sense. And it would be very bad politics.

There have been blunders. The Bitburg incident, in May of 1985, was one of them. By toughing out his decision to participate in a wreath-laying ceremony at a German military cemetery, however, the President managed to appear steadfast in the face of a torrent of criticism from the press. South Africa was another miscalculation. In 1985, under pressure from Congress to abandon his policy of constructive engagement, the President reversed course and signed an executive order imposing limited sanctions against the South African government. Few people attacked him for inconsistency. Instead, his belated embrace of moderate sanctions was seen as a brilliant stroke that undercut his critics. In 1986, however, Reagan dug in his heels. He defied Congress and vetoed a tough sanctions bill, apparently hoping to mollify his critics by increasing the diplomatic pressure on South Africa and by appointing a black ambassador. It didn’t work. The President suffered a costly embarrassment last fall when both houses of Congress voted to override his veto.

At the Reykjavik summit last fall Reagan again kept faith with his conservative base. In what the columnist George Will called “the President’s finest hour,” Reagan refused to compromise his Strategic Defense Initiative in return for a historic arms-control agreement. The public’s

immediate response was to support the President for standing up to the Russians. The long-term political costs may be substantial, however. There is a risk that Star Wars will come to be seen as an impediment to rather than an incentive for arms control.

The "two Reagans" always involved a risk. Reagan's strategy has worked for him in the past because there was always a legitimate public purpose behind the inconsistency. It may have caught up with Reagan in the controversy over U.S. arms sales to Iran, however. Talking a tough line on terrorism while condoning the sale of arms to a terrorist regime makes sense only if the policy has an obvious payoff. The payoff in Iran has not been clear, since the President claims we were not trading arms for hostages. Worse, the diversion of funds to the contras in Nicaragua makes it appear that the Administration was using illicit means to pursue its ideological agenda.

ON SOCIAL ISSUES REAGAN'S IDEOLOGY HAS BEEN highly divisive—and his pragmatism highly effective. He gives fire-breathing speeches to the religious right and endorses their agenda, but then he does very little to implement it. The Administration lets Senator Jesse Helms, of North Carolina, lead the fight in the Senate on issues like abortion and school prayer. That strategy virtually ensures defeat, since every vote becomes a vote on Helms, one of the most disliked and distrusted members of Congress. Yet it serves the Administration's purpose. Reagan keeps the faith with the religious right,

but he does not endanger his support among yuppies and suburbanites, who dislike the Moral Majority's social agenda. Had a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion passed Congress during his first term, Reagan would have had immense difficulty winning the majorities he eventually got among young voters and upper-middle-class voters in 1984. The Administration's social-issue strategy epitomizes its cautious approach: stay away from damaging legislative confrontations. Instead, work for change in the long run by gradually conservatizing the federal judiciary.

Reagan's success as President has accomplished what his ideas have not, however. It has made the case for conservative Republicanism. Americans are pragmatists. Pragmatists believe that whatever works must be right. If big government worked during the New Deal, then it must have been right, at least for that time. If Reagan's conservative policies are working—and most people still think they are—then they must be right for our time. By demonstrating that his ideas work, Reagan has won many people to his cause who do not agree with his ideas or values.

Ideologues believe that if something is wrong, it cannot work, even if it does work. That was a problem for old-guard Republicans during the 1930s and 1940s. They claimed that the New Deal could not work because it was wrong; it entailed an unprecedented growth of government and threatened tremendous inflation. Those warnings proved right—fifty years later. It took the hyperinflation of the 1970s to make the Republicans' case. Similarly, liberal Democratic ideologues believe that Reaganism cannot work because it is wrong. Eventually, they may

SUNDAY IN THE OLD REPUBLIC

Where a cathedral shows
the sun-sliced orange face,
windows fanned and roseate,
and a black-tasseled carriage

clops from past centuries
through the black iron gates
of the park that breathes
through those ribs, maids

curse their stumbling kids
near the artificial lakes
floating with strolling crowds
of lilies, a bearded fin-de-siècle

likes to sit on the iron curl
of a carved bench. Silk hats,
clouds' crumpled linen coats
and dragonflies whose gauze

wings fade like rainbows.
Lies. It was never like this.
There never was any peace
in the spin of parasols;

their peace only exists
in the leaf-shadowed prose
of the imaginary Republic, its
Impressionist canvases.

with questioning tail and eyes
that seem always amazed
at the chain around its waist
or at the nurses' cries

at children on the edge
of the darkening pasture
where a swan and her cygnets
sail faster and faster

down the cold current.

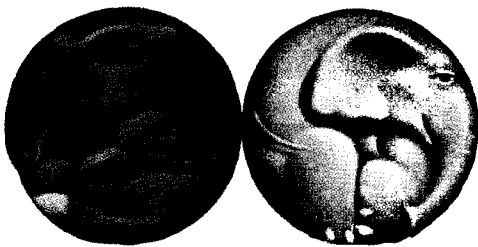
—Derek Walcott

Down the path, the old peach-
colored path, a soldier's
barrel-organ goes, a pouch
on one eye, and a marmoset

prove to be right. But it could take fifty years. In the meantime pragmatism rules.

Is ideology, then, irrelevant? Obviously not. The passionate side of politics is also involved, although values and beliefs tend to change rather slowly. Consider, for instance, the long-term changes in values and party commitments that are reflected in the Democratic presidential vote. The Democrats have nominated basically the same presidential ticket three times, and they have gotten about the same vote each time. In 1968, 1972, and 1984 the Democratic Party nominated a northern liberal Protestant for President and a northern liberal Catholic for Vice President. Hubert Humphrey and Edmund Muskie won 43 percent of the vote in 1968. George McGovern and Sargent Shriver carried 38 percent in 1972. And in 1984 Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro ended up with 41 percent. The Democrats, it appears, have mastered the art of getting about 40 percent of the presidential vote.

But it is a different 40 percent from the one the Democrats garnered with Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver in 1956. Mondale did significantly better than Stevenson among black voters, the college-educated, women, Jews, and professionals. Stevenson's support was stronger among whites, men, blue-collar workers, union households, and Catholics. Mondale ran ahead of Stevenson in the Northeast, whereas Stevenson ran a good deal ahead in the South and West. Between the Stevenson and Mondale races lay the 1960s, when the contours of both the Democratic and the Republican votes began to change. The conflicts of that era brought about lasting shifts in the electorate's values, loyalties, and commitments. These changes started long before the Reagan revolution. In fact, they caused the Reagan revolution.



The New American Politics

TWO THINGS HAPPENED. THE FIRST WAS THE RISE OF the New Politics, which brought about the ideological realignment of the Democratic and Republican parties. In the 1960s the Republicans began to move to the right and to attract a new conservative coalition. At the same time, the Democrats started moving to the left, with the result that the party gained a new liberal constituency and alienated its old-line conservative wing. These changes occurred mostly at the elite level, among political activists coming out of the New Right and the New Politics left. These activists eventually gained influence over, if not total control of, the two major parties.

The second change, the rise of anti-establishment populism, occurred at the mass level and had little to do with ideology. It was stimulated by two decades of failure and frustration. Populism is neither liberal nor conservative but anti-elitist. The last two men elected President of the United States, one a Democrat and the other a Republican, were both anti-Washington candidates who appealed to this sentiment. As a result of the great inflation of the 1970s, anti-establishment populism turned into a revolt against government, the ultimate symbol of the establishment and the status quo. The first stirrings were visible in the tax revolt of 1978, two years before Ronald Reagan won the presidency. It was the anti-government revolt that brought the conservative coalition and Reagan to power.

The year 1964 was the dividing line between the old politics and the New American Politics. The Republican nomination of Barry Goldwater represented a sharp break with the past. The Democrats in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations also broke with their past, by making the courageous, and ultimately costly, decision to embrace the civil-rights movement. For the next two decades the parties continued to move apart ideologically. This transformation is symbolized by the two most important third-party movements of the past twenty-five years. Conservative Democrats, mostly southern whites, felt homeless in 1968 and rallied behind the independent candidacy of George Wallace. They could not stay in a party committed to civil rights. Liberal Republicans felt homeless in 1980 and rallied behind the independent candidacy of John Anderson. They could not stay in a party that had become completely Reaganized.

Nowhere did this realignment have a greater impact than in the South. What was once the most solidly Democratic region of the country is now predominantly Republican in presidential elections. Since 1964 the South has given majority support to the Democratic ticket only once, in 1976, and even then Jimmy Carter failed to carry white southerners. The South provides the base for what has become a normal Republican presidential majority.

In the 1950s it was possible to talk about a Democratic Party establishment and a Republican Party establishment that were more or less in control of their parties' policies and organizations. The parties differed mainly on economic issues—the Democrats were the big spenders, the Republicans the party of austerity—and neither foreign policy nor social issues entered into the partisan debate. Both sides endorsed the bipartisan Cold War consensus. The most pressing social issue, race, was confused. The Democrats still had a large contingent of southern white racists, while it was a Republican Chief Justice who wrote the 1954 Supreme Court decision mandating school integration and a Republican President who sent troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, to enforce it.

In the 1960s and 1970s both party establishments were targets of protest movements. The first challenge came from the right, in 1964, when the Goldwater movement mobilized conservative activists to wrest control of the Re-



Republican Party from the eastern establishment. The liberal protest movement emerged with the anti-war candidacy of Eugene McCarthy in 1968. In 1972 liberal activists mobilized in the Democratic primaries and caucuses to nominate George McGovern and defeat the party establishment that had stolen the nomination from them four years earlier. The presidential nominations of Barry Goldwater in 1964 and George McGovern in 1972 signaled the initial victories of these protest movements. Although both candidates were defeated in the ensuing general elections, their followers moved into positions of prominence in the two parties, either displacing the party regulars or forcing them to accommodate.

The protest movements introduced new ideological issues into party politics. The New Right conservatives attacked the Republican establishment for making too many compromises with big government—including acceptance of civil-rights legislation—and for being too willing to accept peaceful coexistence with communism. The Democratic establishment had already taken a giant step to the left on civil rights. The New Politics movement took the party one step further to the left by challenging the party leadership's commitment to the Truman Doctrine, the

principle of anti-Communist intervention that got us into Vietnam. In the 1960s social issues and foreign policy began to be partisan issues, alongside enduring party differences over taxes, spending, and regulation.

In the old days politicians liked to say that a political party was a big tent, with room inside for all kinds of people. The Democratic Party included southern white racists, blacks, urban bosses, and liberal reformers. The Republicans had a large and vibrant progressive wing as well as a solid base of conservatives, often in the same state (Robert La Follette and Joseph McCarthy in Wisconsin, for example). After 1964, however, the tents got smaller. Racists and right-wingers were driven out of the Democratic tent. And liberal Republicans faced a difficult choice. They could leave the party (as John Lindsay and John Anderson did). They could become real conservatives (like Spiro Agnew and George Bush). Or they could lose, often in primaries (as Thomas Kuchel, Clifford Case, and Jacob Javits did).

In every presidential election from 1964 through 1976 the polls showed that Nelson A. Rockefeller was one of the strongest candidates the Republican Party could nominate. Among Rockefeller's advantages was that he was

good at getting Democratic votes. But Republican activists and primary voters would look at Rockefeller and ask, "Is he one of us?" The answer was not helpful to Rockefeller's cause. So what if he could get a lot of Democratic votes? He wasn't a real conservative, and that meant he didn't fit into the newly conservatized Republican Party. He was outside the tent.

In 1984 Senator John Glenn claimed to be the most "electable" Democrat running for President. He was probably right. The polls showed that had Republicans selected the Democratic Party's nominee, they would have nominated Glenn for President. But Republicans don't select the Democratic nominee. That is done by Democrats who participate in primaries and attend party caucuses. Those Democrats demanded to know of Glenn, "Is he one of us?" As it happens, John Glenn was the first candidate to attack Walter Mondale as the candidate of the past and the special interests. Later, Senator Gary Hart ran on those themes and nearly became the Democratic nominee. But they didn't work for Glenn. At debates before Iowa Democrats, Glenn's competitors would point to him and say, "This man voted for Reaganomics," and even worse, and more simplistic, "This man voted for poison nerve gas." That was too much for the liberal activists, union organizers, and radical nuns who populated such meetings. The judgment of Iowa was that Glenn was not a liberal and, therefore, not a real Democrat. It didn't matter how electable he was or how many Republican votes he might get. He was outside the tent.

As the party tents have gotten smaller, the tests for getting in have gotten tougher. There are more and more things that "real Republicans" and "real Democrats" have to do or say, and more and more things they cannot do or say without casting suspicion upon themselves. Candidates in both parties have to pass litmus tests in order to be certified as of the true political faith. The tests are administered by issue activists who guard the party orthodoxy in their own special areas of interest. The activists have the power to declare candidates politically correct or politically incorrect.

A real Democrat, for instance, must talk about compassion and fairness. These days Democrats can get away with not calling for major new domestic-spending programs. But it is politically incorrect for a Democrat to talk about spending cuts in entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare. In 1985 no less than the chairman of the Democratic National Committee mentioned the idea of "means-testing" Social Security payments. Within a few hours he was forced to retract this grievous breach of party orthodoxy. Means-testing is also a favorite theme of retiring Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt. As a result he has imperiled his national political career, if not his immortal Democratic soul. This particular litmus test is enforced by the party's traditional New Deal forces—the labor unions and the party leadership in Congress.

A real Republican doesn't talk about compassion and fairness. He talks about big government. As it happens,

Republicans have been talking about cutting government spending since the days of Calvin Coolidge, and it has usually gotten them in trouble. That was before the revolution, when the Republicans were the austerity party. In the 1980s, however, the proper Republican approach to this issue is to focus on taxes. The way to eliminate big government is to starve it of funds. No austerity needed. Just cut people's taxes. No matter how concerned a candidate is about the deficit, a true Republican never, never advocates raising taxes. That is politically incorrect, and the supply-side faction of the party will see to it that this litmus test is enforced.

From the early twentieth century to the 1960s the Democrats maintained a historic compromise with racism. It was symbolized by the presence of a southern or border-state Democrat on almost every national party ticket. No more. The party establishment embraced the civil-rights movement in the early 1960s, banishing racism and a good many old-line southern Democrats. Nowadays civil rights is a key litmus test in the Democratic Party, enforced by the party's extensive network of minority-rights activists. In 1976 Jimmy Carter used civil rights to prove that despite the suspicion of many liberals, he was a real Democrat. No candidate who got all those black votes could be outside the Democratic tent. An authentic Democrat must be in favor of affirmative action, although he may have some wiggle room on the issue of busing. We will see exactly how much wiggle room there is if Senator Joseph Biden, Jr., of Delaware, a critic of busing but a strong supporter of civil rights, runs for President in 1988.

Women's rights is also a Democratic litmus test—not just the Equal Rights Amendment but also freedom of choice on abortion. Although a Democrat may personally disapprove of abortion, it is politically incorrect to support a constitutional amendment to ban all abortions, on the grounds that one shouldn't use the government to impose one's morality on others. Representative Richard Gephardt used to support a constitutional ban on abortions. Then he got interested in running for President in 1988 and changed his mind. Women's-rights groups see to it that Democrats toe the line on the ERA and abortion.

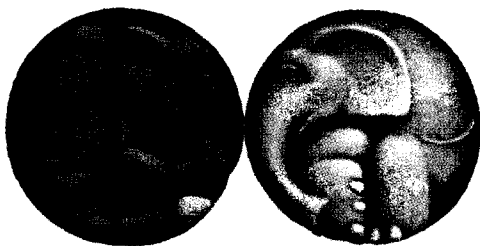
The abortion issue is also a problem for Republicans. As it happens, most Republicans do not support a constitutional ban on abortions; a *Los Angeles Times* poll showed that a majority of delegates to the party's 1984 national convention opposed such a ban. Nevertheless, the politically correct position for a Republican is to be pro-life—that is, anti-abortion. Republicans who favor freedom of choice get into a lot of trouble with the religious right, whose job it is to guard the party against backsliding on this issue.

On foreign policy the Democrats used to support Cold War interventionism. In fact, they invented it, in the form of the Truman Doctrine. That ended in 1972, when the Democrats learned what they call the lesson of Vietnam. Candidates ignore that lesson at their peril. The peace movement may be dead, but the large and powerful New

Politics constituency cut its teeth on the Vietnam issue. They have declared it politically incorrect for a Democrat to support military aid to the contras in Nicaragua. Representative Les Aspin, the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, voted for contra aid last year, and ever since then his party colleagues have been trying to take away his committee chairmanship. Senator Bill Bradley also voted for contra aid and thereby put at risk his prospects of running for the Democratic presidential nomination. Nicaragua to Democrats is "another Vietnam."

To Republicans, Nicaragua is "another Cuba." Republicans must support aid to the contras in order to prove their commitment to the Reagan Doctrine, which requires active resistance to Third World communism. The Republicans' foreign-policy litmus test is administered by the neo-conservative wing of the party, which consists mostly of former Democrats who, like Jeane Kirkpatrick, switched parties because the Democrats gave up the Harry Truman-Hubert Humphrey-Henry Jackson tradition of Cold War interventionism. Neo-conservatives are not about to let the same thing happen to their newly adopted party.

Where do the litmus-testers get their power? Not from numbers but from the fact that they are organized and can mobilize their supporters to participate in low-turnout party primaries and caucuses. They can be beaten, of course, if rank-and-file partisans get angry and decide to come out against them. Many traditional Republicans resent the influence of the religious right in their party, for example, and may be moved to participate in primaries and caucuses in order to save the party from what they see as an alien invasion. The 1988 southern regional primary has been organized by Democrats for the same reason—that is, to save the party from litmus-testers by overwhelming them with moderate southern primary voters. In both parties the critical question is whether moderates really care enough about "saving the party" to show up at the polls and outvote the litmus-testers.



The Politics of Affluence

WALTER DEAN BURNHAM, OF THE MASSACHUSETTS Institute of Technology, has described a "new politics of affluence," in which he observes an upper-middle-class bias. Our major parties, he says, have narrowed their bases by ignoring the lower strata and aiming to appeal to ideological activists. Both the New Right and the New Politics left have roots in America's upper-middle-class suburbs. That is one reason why, as the par-

ties have become more ideological since 1964, voter turnout has declined. The drop-off has been especially marked among the poor and the less well educated, who do not respond to the suburban style of politics.

What is distinctive about the upper middle class is its sense of security and self-satisfaction, of having achieved the good life. California, an overwhelmingly suburban state, is the heartland of upper-middle-class politics. Californians are not usually depicted as secure and self-satisfied. The conventional view is that they are rootless and frustrated. That is supposed to be the key to the state's unconventional politics. But look at what two close observers of the Golden State have had to say about its culture and politics.

The political scientist James Q. Wilson grew up in what he calls "Reagan country." In a 1967 *Commentary* article Wilson tried to explain "Southern California's political culture" to puzzled eastern intellectuals. Where did the Goldwater and Reagan movements come from? They did not come from people who were frustrated, alienated, or unhappy, Wilson argued. Yet they were protest movements just the same. "It is not with their lot that they are discontent," Wilson wrote. "It is with the lot of the nation. *The very virtues they have and practice are, in their eyes, conspicuously absent from society as a whole.*"

In another article published in 1967 Richard Todd used the same idea to explain, among other things, a very different side of California culture—the Berkeley phenomenon. That campus had erupted, many commentators suggested, because the students were alienated and dehumanized. Feeling like faceless numbers in a vast mega-university, they channeled their misery and discontent into political protest. Todd spent some time at Berkeley. He found "turmoil" there, yes, but not much evidence of personal frustration or despair. He found instead "the peculiar kind of joy that is a result of self-absorption. . . . [a] sense of rightness." The Berkeley life-style was tolerant, expressive, open, nonviolent, permissive, and, above all, contented. No one wanted to leave. Then why were the students angry? Because the outside world was racist, uptight, elitist, violent, and repressive. The very virtues that Berkeley students had and practiced were, in their eyes, conspicuously absent from society as a whole.

This is the germ of the New American Politics, left and right: it is a politics of values rather than interests. It thrives on a sense of resentment, but of a very special kind. The New Right resents the fact that the country is being run by relativists and subversives, not by moral and patriotic people "like us." The New Politics left resents the fact that the country is being run by bigots and warmongers, not by tolerant and non-aggressive people "like us."

Some years ago, in an analysis of California voting behavior for *Politics Today* magazine, I noted that two of the wealthiest counties in the state exemplified the divergent cultures of the upper middle class. Orange County, a vast suburb of Los Angeles, first captured the nation's fancy

the 1960s. From its nouveau-riche culture emerged the candidacies of Barry Goldwater in 1964 and Ronald Reagan in 1966. Marin County, above San Francisco, is the homeland of the laid-back and fashionably liberal upper middle class. Both are suburban counties, prosperous and overwhelmingly white. But Marin County regularly voted about 20 percentage points more Democratic than Orange County. In party primaries the two constituencies were sharply polarized. In the 1964 Republican primary, between Barry Goldwater and Nelson A. Rockefeller, Goldwater carried 66 percent of the vote in Orange and 33 percent in Marin. In the 1972 Democratic presidential primary, between George McGovern and Hubert Humphrey, McGovern won Marin with 63 percent and lost Orange with 40 percent.

The difference is one of culture, not class. The prevailing culture of Orange County is that of business, religion, and patriotism. Within its borders are Disneyland, the Crystal Cathedral, and the John Wayne Airport. Orange County has tended to attract Protestants from the more fundamentalist denominations, usually with family backgrounds in the South and Middle West. The prevailing culture of Marin County—expressive, self-absorbed, and consumerist—has been the subject of devastating satire: Cyra McFadden's book *The Serial* and an NBC Reports documentary titled *I Want It All Now*. Marin attracts high-income professionals, often educated at elite universities. Their religious background is typically high-status Protestant, Jewish, or Catholic, and their family origins tend to be in the Northeast. Orange and Marin counties illustrate a pattern that can be found all over the country: the two distinct political subcultures of the American upper middle class.

JUST AS MIDDLE-CLASS VOTERS SPLIT ALONG CONSERVATIVE-liberal lines, so too did white working-class voters, especially after the wave of racial violence that hit America's cities in the late 1960s. In 1968, for example, Humphrey and Wallace competed for white working-class votes. As civil rights turned into black power, and integration gave way to busing and quotas, the civil-rights movement met with anger and resistance from the white working class. Racial fear and "law and order" sentiment provided the New Right with fertile ground from which to reap a populist base. It was the law-and-order backlash in California—public anger over the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley and anxiety over the Watts riots in Los Angeles—that first brought Ronald Reagan to prominence, in 1966.

As Burnham suggests, the new ideological politics crosses class lines. "Limousine liberalism" is often characterized as a top-bottom coalition of the guilt-ridden rich and the dependent poor. The new conservative coalition is also a top-bottom one, allying "country club" businessmen with "rednecks" and fundamentalists. Lower-status people are not so much left out of the New American Politics

as divided by it. Liberals appeal to their economic populism, conservatives to their social populism.

The parties have been trading supporters as a result of the New American Politics. While the suburban vote in the South has become solidly Republican, Democrats have made substantial inroads among affluent upper-middle-class voters outside the South. These New Politics voters, many of whom, like John Anderson, were traditionally Republican, cannot abide the reactionary social agenda of the new Republican Party. They are attracted to New Politics liberals like George McGovern, Morris Udall, and Gary Hart, not to old-fashioned Democrats like Walter Mondale or moderates like Jimmy Carter.

But the Democratic Party has been losing much of its traditional support among white southerners, conservative Catholics, and blue-collar voters who feel threatened by social and cultural change. Conservative Democrats are attracted not to moderate Republicans like Gerald Ford but to right-wing Republicans like Ronald Reagan, Strom Thurmond, Jesse Helms, John Connally, and Phil Gramm—all of whom used to be Democrats. As conservatives, all of them found themselves out of place in their party. They "realigned" and took many of their supporters with them.

This realignment occurred in two stages. First, in 1968 and 1972 the Democrats lost the support of social and foreign-policy conservatives (southern whites in 1968 and neo-conservatives in 1972). But the party was still competitive, as demonstrated by its comeback in 1976. The 1980 and 1984 elections were more damaging, because the Democrats were in danger of losing their economic-issue base. What held the Democratic Party together for fifty years was economic populism—the belief that the party would protect people against economic adversity. That belief kept the party going during the years when it was tearing itself apart over civil rights and Vietnam. Under Jimmy Carter, however, the Democrats failed to offer economic protection. The Reagan recovery allowed the Republicans to compete with the Democrats on the economic issue for the first time in fifty years. Without the economic issue the Democrats risk becoming a liberal party instead of a populist party. The Democrats are beginning to look like a party of upper-middle-class liberals and minority groups who have the same social philosophy.

The realignment has been in the direction of ideological consistency, while the typical voter remains ideologically inconsistent. Many working-class voters seek economic protection from the Democratic Party but do not trust its social liberalism. Middle-class suburbanites favor Reagan's low-tax policies but are disturbed by the messages of religious fundamentalism, anti-environmentalism, and foreign interventionism that sometimes emanate from the White House. In many ways the New Deal party system with its ideologically inconsistent parties fit the electorate better. As Burnham argues, realignment has narrowed the parties' bases and left many voters with no comfortable home.

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The Issue of Government

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IS THE ETERNAL ISSUE in American politics. An economically activist federal government is one that manages, guides, and regulates the economy. Is that liberal or conservative? In the nineteenth century, when government was regarded as a bastion of privilege, the out-groups of society favored a laissez-faire state. Jacksonian Democrats, as the party of the "left," opposed many forms of government economic intervention, such as a national bank, incorporation through legislative charter, and even government-sponsored internal improvements. The Federalists, the Whigs, and later the Radical Republicans were more comfortable with statism and government intervention (for instance, Henry Clay's "American System"), which they defended in the name of nationalism.

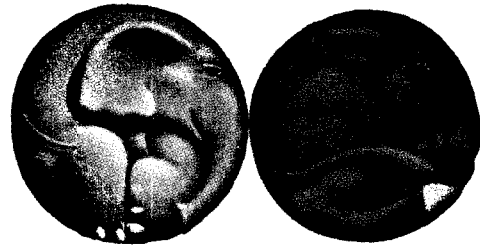
Even more divisive was the view that the federal government should endorse or mandate certain social values, such as abolitionism, temperance, racial equality, sexual freedom, and religious rights. Those who favor a socially activist federal government usually do so in the name of universal moral values or human rights. Those who resist say that they are defending pluralism: we are a country with no official religion, ideology, or culture, and so the state must be scrupulously neutral in such matters. In the nineteenth century the conservative parties were the parties of the cultural establishment, usually the Protestant elite, which wanted to use government to reform and control society. The Jeffersonian Democrats were supported by out-groups and the disestablished. Consequently, it was the Democrats who supported religious freedom, states' rights, and cultural laissez-faire.

These historical party positions were reversed in the twentieth century for a simple reason: the role of government changed. Capitalism is revolutionary. It creates rapid and large-scale social change through what Joseph Schumpeter called the process of "creative destruction." Those who are threatened by change, the losers in the process, gravitate toward government for protection—not just impoverished farmers and workers but also victims of discrimination and those whose values are endangered by cultural change.

Historically, in Europe as well as the United States, government power had been allied with economic power and social privilege. Out-groups distrusted and opposed the state. The progressives were the first to use the power of the state to attack private concentrations of power. Eventually the New Dealers discovered a fundamentally new role for government—protecting people against economic adversity. Government became the enemy of economic privilege, or what Franklin D. Roosevelt called "the economic royalists." Economic out-groups began to look to the federal government for protection—for jobs, relief, unemployment compensation, old-age pensions, and the safeguarding of labor rights. Government power became associated with the economic left.

A further change occurred in the 1950s and 1960s. The civil-rights movement redefined the role of the federal government in social relations. Government was used to reform society, but this time it was to benefit the victims of social discrimination. The Democrats discovered in the 1930s that the power of the federal government could be used to promote economic justice. They discovered in the 1960s that it could be used to promote social justice.

Government, which had once been seen as a bastion of social and economic privilege, came to be viewed as a force for social and economic egalitarianism. That would seem to give the Democrats a populist appeal. It did, for about fifty years. But then, in the 1960s and 1970s, something happened to undermine that appeal. What happened was the rise of anti-establishment populism, which quickly turned into a revolt against government—and against the party of big government.



Anti-Establishment Populism

ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT POPULISM IS THE GREAT ENGINE of political innovation in this country. Americans are deeply conservative about their system and their institutions. But they are deeply radical in their attitudes toward the rich and powerful: suspicious of how they got that way, resentful that they think they are better than everyone else. The American public instinctively distrusts concentrations of power, whether in government, business, labor, the press, or anywhere else. Watch television, a highly populist medium with a mass audience, sometime and see how little sympathy is expended on big shots, whether they are businessmen, politicians, or hospital administrators. Viewers, like voters—in fact, they *are* voters—enjoy seeing powerful people get what's coming to them.

Anti-establishment populism was the key to the success of both the New Right in the Republican Party and the New Politics left on the Democratic side. Kevin Phillips saw it in 1969, when he published *The Emerging Republican Majority*. To Phillips, the energy behind the Goldwater and Reagan movements came more from anti-establishment resentment than from conservative ideology. The New Right was out to overthrow the Republican Party's liberal eastern establishment, which, they said, had made an immoral accommodation with communism abroad and with the New Deal at home. But the right had a larger target as well: the establishment that had been running the federal government for thirty years.

Meanwhile, the Democratic Party establishment was under attack from both sides. First George Wallace ran against Lyndon Johnson in the 1964 Democratic presidential primaries and effectively carried the politics of racial backlash from South to North. The second front was opened up in 1968, when the party establishment was challenged from the left by the anti-war movement. During this tumultuous period in the Democratic Party's recent history, the battle was not between the party's left and right; it was the left and the right against the center. What made Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, Richard Daley, and the labor unions such inviting targets was that they epitomized the entrenched power of an establishment that thrived on bosses and deals and froze "the people" out of the 1968 convention.

The same forces mobilized in 1972, with Wallace again on the right and George McGovern leading the anti-war left. McGovern's pollster, Patrick Caddell, came up with an interesting idea. If a suitable populist theme could be found—possibly tax reform, he thought—then maybe the right and the left could join forces and defeat the party establishment. That turned out to be impossible in 1972, because the issues on which the Wallace and the McGovern voters disagreed—civil rights, Vietnam—were far more salient than the views they shared. But to his credit, Caddell stuck with his "alienated voter" theory and made it work for Jimmy Carter in 1976.

Carter was the perfect anti-establishment candidate—an outsider and a populist with no clear ideological identification. He defeated the party's ideological factions one at a time, each on its own turf: the right (Wallace) in Florida, the left (Morris Udall) in Wisconsin, and the center (Henry Jackson) in Pennsylvania. In the general election Carter was able to pull together enough regular Democrats, Wallace voters, and McGovernites to win the election. Of course it helped that his opponent, Gerald Ford, had already been softened up by an anti-establishment challenge from Ronald Reagan.

Anti-establishment populism is still a potent force, as Walter Mondale discovered in 1984. Mondale made the mistake of running as an insider, someone who knew his way around Washington, in order to distance himself from Jimmy Carter's failed presidency. That made him vulnerable, like his mentor Hubert Humphrey before him, to a New Politics challenge from someone outside the party establishment. The challenge came from Gary Hart, George McGovern's 1972 campaign manager. And Hart's strategist was, once again, Patrick Caddell. George Bush seems determined to imitate Mondale's campaign of inevitability in 1988. He may end up learning the same lesson—that you make yourself a target by identifying with the party establishment.

In 1988 Representative Jack Kemp, a self-styled populist and outsider, aspires to play the role of Gary Hart to Bush's Mondale. He is critical of the orthodox Republican position on deficits and spending, portraying it as a vestige of the party's historical economic elitism. "In the past the

left had a thesis: spending, redistribution of wealth, and deficits," Kemp says. "We were the antithesis—spending is bad. What Reagan represented was a breakthrough for our party. We could talk about lower taxes and more growth. We didn't have to spend all our time preaching austerity and spending cuts. The real question now is, do we take our thesis and move it further or do we revert to an anti-spending party?"

For a Republican, that is anti-establishment thinking. Kemp's objective is to dissociate the party from its own "special interest" problem—namely, the party's ties to big business and country-club wealth. "How do we make a majority party out of a party that heretofore has been associated with a narrow base?" he asks. "How do we broaden it to include blacks, Hispanics, young people, and blue-collar working folks?"

Republicans and Democrats hit upon the same answer last year. It was precisely the issue that Caddell had talked about as the key to "the alienated voter" in 1972—tax reform. After all, nothing symbolized the power of the lobbyists and the special interests better than the exemption-ridden, loophole-laden tax code. Actually, many Republicans had serious reservations about tax reform, particularly because the final bill shifted much of the tax burden onto business. House Republicans nearly killed tax reform in December of 1985, and it was only a last-minute rally led by Republican Bob Packwood, the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, that saved the bill in the Senate. Tax reform was an irresistible symbol of anti-establishment populism—one that was not easy for Congress to pass, since establishment interests are well represented in that assembly.

Despite the claims made for the "populist" appeal of tax reform, the evidence suggests that the public didn't care all that much about the issue. In a poll taken just before the final bill passed Congress last year, a five-to-four majority said that they would just as soon see Congress leave the tax code alone. The absence of popular fervor for tax reform suggests how much the anti-government movement has changed. It began in 1978 with the tax revolt, a grass-roots popular protest, but ended up eight years later as an organized reform plan supported by the President and the congressional leadership and promulgated upon a largely indifferent but wary public.

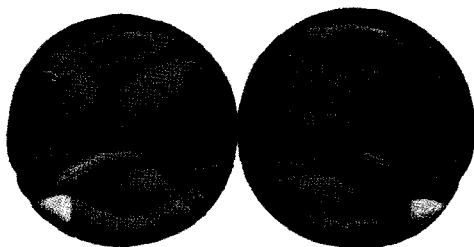
IN THE LATE 1970S ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT POPULISM changed from a mood to a movement—it became a revolt against government. The anti-government revolt was the culmination of twenty years of crisis and decline. First came "the sixties" (1964–1974), a sequence of events that seemed to expose the underlying corruption of American institutions: the Vietnam War, racial violence, campus protest, feminism, environmentalism, consumerism, and the final paroxysm, Watergate. In "the seventies" (1974–1984) the news was just as bad, but now most of it concerned the economy: the energy crisis, surging interest

rates, and a great inflation sandwiched between two major recessions.

The failures of the sixties and seventies were failures of government. Not only was the federal government unable to manage problems like Vietnam, Watergate, inflation, and the energy crisis but it had created those problems in the first place. To the Depression generation, government meant the New Deal, the Second World War, and the prosperity of the fifties: government was the solution. To the generation that came of age in the sixties and seventies, government was the problem.

The single most prominent characteristic of public opinion during the seventies was widespread disillusionment with government. The public did not reverse its position on the legitimacy of most government functions, such as helping the poor and regulating business. But the feeling grew that the federal government had become excessively wasteful and ineffective in carrying out those functions. Something had to be done. This sentiment led to the tax revolt of 1978 and, two years later, to the election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency and the Republican takeover of the Senate.

The anti-government revolt had been brewing for many years. Polls taken by the University of Michigan showed steadily rising anti-government feeling beginning in 1964. The percentage of Americans who believed that they could trust the government in Washington "to do what is right" most or all of the time went from 76 percent in 1964 to 54 percent in 1970, to 33 percent in 1976, and to 25 percent in 1980. The proportion who felt that the government was run "by a few big interests looking out for themselves" was 29 percent in 1964, 50 percent in 1970, and 69 percent in 1980. Less than half of the public in 1964 thought that the government wasted a lot of tax money; the figure was two thirds in 1970 and more than three quarters by 1980. Reagan's conservative regime is a natural consequence of this trend.



1988

THE ANTI-GOVERNMENT REVOLT IS NOW OVER, THE polls say. Every one of the trends monitored by the Michigan political-trust questions has ceased or reversed direction. Tax resentment has declined measurably, not just over federal income taxes (which have, after all, been reduced) but also over Social Security taxes (which have gone up) and state and local taxes. The public now favors higher spending on domestic social programs

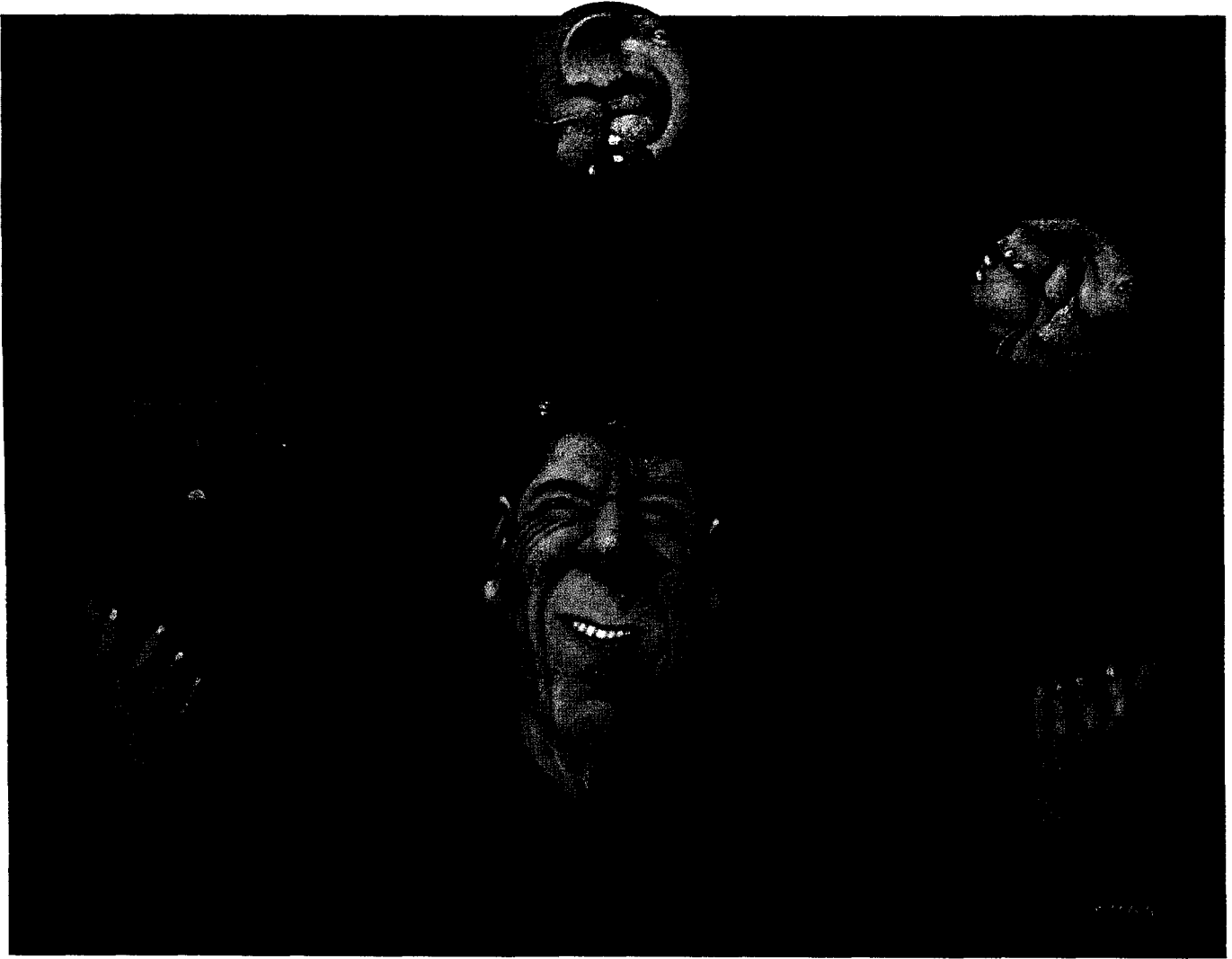
and no further increases in the military budget. The revolt against government lost its edge as Reaganomics took shape and inflation subsided.

The politicians, however, don't seem to have noticed that the anti-government revolt is over. Republicans talk about preserving and extending the Reagan revolution against government, not modifying it. A *New York Times* survey prior to the 1986 congressional races found that "as Republican congressional candidates around the country . . . attack their opponents as free-spending 'Tip O'Neill liberals,' Democrats are resorting to a variety of tactics to shed that label. . . . Democrats are going to great lengths . . . to demonstrate their tight-fisted patriotism." In September the Democratic Policy Commission, which was mandated to define a new image for the party, came up with a centrist document that tried to cut the party's link to big government. Instead of a ringing affirmation of traditional Democratic goals—fairness, equity, jobs, and new government programs to improve the quality of life—the statement offers a commitment to "choices and opportunities," "achievement and progress," and "a growing economy." It tactfully omits any mention of divisive social issues such as abortion, affirmative action, and homosexual rights. But it includes tough criticism of the Soviet Union ("Democrats harbor no illusions about arms control") and a strong commitment to protecting the family.

Are the politicians slow to pick up on what's happening in the country? Has Reagan cowed the Democratic Party into submission? Actually, politicians are good at reading the public mood. They have a strong interest in getting it right. They know that if the anti-government revolt is over, that's because it has been judged a success by most voters. There is little public support for undoing what Reagan has done and going back to the bad old days of high inflation and low military security. Like most successful revolutions, the Reagan revolution has become a national consensus.

Both parties have to adjust to this fact. It is not particularly easy on the Republicans, who have to figure out just what is next on their agenda. Senator Paul Laxalt says, "Those who are philosophically like-minded with the President still constitute a very small minority of this government. . . . The President is going to have to continue putting key people in policy positions. And whoever follows must do the same thing for several years." Without a Republican majority in the Senate, Senator Baker says, "the Democrats will crucify [Reagan] in the remaining two years of his term. I don't think the public wants that to happen." The message is, protect the revolution.

Jack Kemp, however, is fairly bursting with ideas, plans, schemes, and enthusiasms. "What are going to be the issues and policy reforms necessary to take a new beginning into a renaissance, if not a completion, then an expansion, of what has been done? We have to find some way to bring the minority communities and the inner cities into the economic expansion. And, very frankly, the Third World and the rest of the world too." Kemp's ambitions—"Tomorrow



the world!"—have so far met with a noticeable absence of enthusiasm from the party faithful. "What's he getting so excited about?" asked a puzzled Republican state legislator listening to Kemp speak at a conference of state legislators in New Orleans. "I think things are going pretty good."

The Democrats, for their part, fall into several traps. One is to take consolation from polls indicating that Reagan's appeal is wholly personal, that people feel better about government, or that the welfare state is alive and well. The message seems to be, none of this is really happening, and if we just wait a couple of years, it will all blow over. The problem with this approach is that there are equally valid polls indicating that people are pretty much satisfied with the way things are going in the country, that Republican partisanship is substantially higher than it used to be, that voters trust the Republicans more than they do the Democrats at managing the economy and foreign policy, and that there is not much sentiment for a fundamental change of direction in the country. Those kinds of attitudes matter a good deal more than ideology when it comes time to vote.

But what about the 1986 midterm, when the Democrats

regained control of the Senate? "If there was a Reagan revolution, it's over," said the retiring House speaker, Tip O'Neill. That interpretation assumes that the 1986 midterm was a national referendum. The Administration tried to make it just that. President Reagan barnstormed nineteen states in an effort to create excitement, drive up turnout, and recast 1986 as a replay of 1980. It didn't work. The Democrats succeeded in focusing the campaign on local candidates and issues, even canceling their customary midterm conference in order to keep the national party invisible. Democrats cannot have it both ways: after avoiding national themes in the campaign, they can hardly claim that the election was a repudiation of the Reagan revolution.

Jeremiads are also quite popular in Democratic circles these days. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., one of the foremost prophets of doom, writes, "When the economic bubble bursts, and burst it will, the public will turn to F.D.R.'s affirmative Government, not to Ronald Reagan's free market, for salvation." The Democratic Policy Commission calls attention to the "shrinking middle class" and to the "Swiss cheese economy" (that is, uneven prosperity). The deficit, the soothsayers say, is the handwriting on the wall:

Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin. Fair enough. If there is a major recession, the Democrats will undoubtedly prosper. The problem is that by incessantly warning of an impending catastrophe, Democrats sound as if they are rooting for it to happen. They just can't wait to say "I told you so."

When Democratic state chairmen met in Orlando in 1985, they were advised not to make the 1986 midterm a referendum on President Reagan or his policies. Participants were presented with the results of a research project showing that voters were no longer interested in the "fairness" issue. It just wasn't selling very well in 1985. It had been a big seller in 1982, a deep recession year when the Democrats called for "fairness" and made big gains. The explanation for the about-face is simple. When the economy is bad, everyone feels threatened; fairness comes to mean "us." When the economy is good, "we" can make it and if other people can't, it must be their own fault; fairness then comes to mean "them." "Middle-class voters all over the country read 'fairness' as 'not me but some other guy,'" a party official reported. "When party leaders talk about 'fairness,' middle-class voters see it as a code word for 'giveaway.'"

That, too, is a trap. Fairness—the party's commitment to working people and to the economically disadvantaged—is what voters like best about the Democratic Party. To his credit, Paul G. Kirk, Jr., the party leader, responded to the issue this way: "I don't want to be chairman of a party that would leave these people behind." Having stood on those principles for 150 years, the Democratic Party, the oldest continuing political party in the world, has acquired a certain brand-name loyalty.

When voters are asked what they like about the Democratic Party, they say, "It is more for the average person, the worker, the ordinary man, and less for the rich and the powerful." What do they dislike about the Democratic Party? "Too much government spending." The party's bulkiest problem, essentially, is how to maintain its decade-long commitment to fairness and equity without always talking about big government. "Of course it's a dilemma," Governor Mario Cuomo, of New York, said. "It's a very serious dilemma. One gets out of it only by communication, not by shifting positions. The Democratic governors, for instance, are all progressive pragmatists. That's the label I give myself. I love it. As people become familiar with it, it becomes the abnegation of everything they think about conservative and liberal, which is why we invented it."

What Cuomo seems to be suggesting is that the Democrats preserve their commitment to the party's goals (no "shifting positions") but show more flexibility on the

means (be "pragmatists"). Pragmatics is precisely the Democrats' problem right now. The voters need reassurance about Democratic competence, not Democratic values. That is why so much attention is being focused on Democratic governors like Cuomo, Babbitt, Michael Dukakis, of Massachusetts, and James Blanchard, of Michigan, all of whom have acquired a can-do image, which is rare in the national party. When the passions of the moment are not in your favor, as they have not been for Democrats for the past six years, the best strategy is to offer a pragmatic alternative. The worst strategy is to frighten the voters with fantasies of retribution.

But in the end, the New American Politics presents as many problems for the Republicans as for the Democrats. Both parties are under the sway of activists who put values above interests and whose demand for ideological consistency makes little sense to ordinary voters. Parties controlled by issue activists are just as closed and just as elitist as parties controlled by bosses. In the larger electorate the only litmus test that matters is, will it work? Just as the Democrats' problems are driving their party toward pragmatism, the Republicans' success may drive their party toward a high-church mentality: the elected become the elect. Already the stories of Washington influence-peddling, disinformation campaigns, and covert activities are giving conservatives the image they hoped desperately to avoid—that of a new establishment. The covert policy of providing arms to Iran, in contradiction to stated U.S. principles and in violation of U.S. law, is redolent of Richard Nixon's imperial presidency.

The 1960 election may offer the best example of what to expect in 1988. After eight years in office the Republicans in 1960 retired a popular and charismatic national hero and nominated his much less appealing Vice President. The Democrats took a chance on a young, largely unknown candidate who claimed to speak for a new generation. The Democrats promised to "get the country moving again." In 1988 the Democrats will probably say, "We can do better," meaning that they will retain what is good about the Reagan revolution and won't go back to the bad old days of Johnson and Carter, but that they will pay more attention to social and economic justice. The electorate will be torn between sticking with the tried-and-true and taking a chance on something new and different—but not too different. The election will be very close. In the past, in elections with no incumbent running, the party out of power has usually won. That's the good news for the Democrats. The bad news, as Senator Biden ruefully puts it, is, "This time we won't have Mayor Daley around to help count the ballots." □

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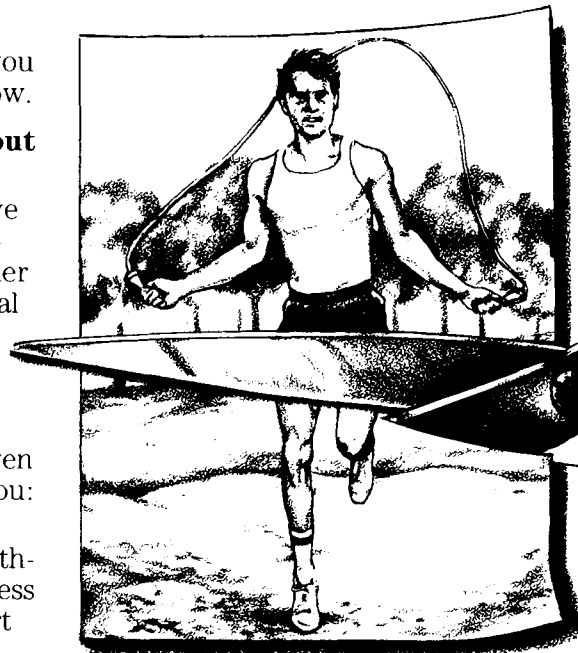
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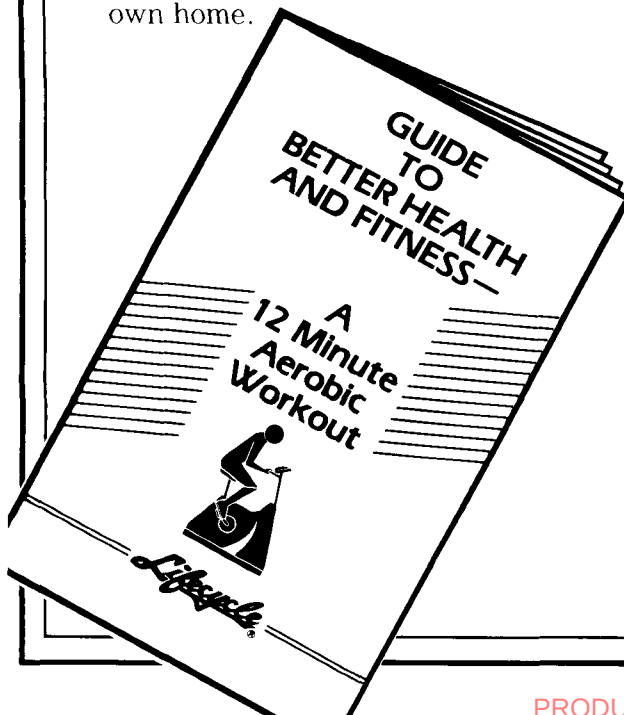
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A Short Story



A FARM AT RARABA

BY ERNST HAVEMANN

MY LATE DAD WAS A MAGNIFICENT SHOT. ONE TIME when we were hunting in the Low Veld and had stopped for a smoke, we heard the yelp of a wild dog, and a troop of impala came bounding over the tall grass. Opposite us, three hundred yards off, was a stony ridge like a wall, six feet high. You would think those buck would avoid it, but no, they went straight at it. One after another, without pausing or swerving, they leaped over it. They cleared it by three or four feet. I tell you, friend, it was a beautiful sight.

By the time the first two impala were over the ridge, late Dad was ready, and as the next one leaped, Dad got him. In midair. Same with the next one, and the next, and the next. And the next. And the next. That was six buck, one after another.

Do you know, the wild dogs chasing those buck didn't stop for the impala that late Dad had killed. They didn't even react to the shots. They just followed one particular buck that they had marked, and we saw them pull it down a couple of minutes later. You've got to hand it to Nature; she knows what she's doing.

But the most wonderful thing was when we got to the dead impala. Four of them were piled one on top of another, neatly, like sacks in a store. Late Dad had shot each of them through the heart, at exactly the same point in its leap. The other two had been a bit slow. Late Dad had got each of them in the shoulder. If you can't get a head or a

heart shot, the next best is the shoulder, because of the bone there. If you hit bone, it brings a creature down. It can't run, you see. The worst place is behind the heart, because then your bullet goes through a lot of soft entrails. A gutshot animal will sometimes run a couple of miles before it drops, and you may never find it. When I hear of fellows shooting like that, I want to put a slug into their guts and see how they would like to die that way.

Those impala were a bit of a problem. We had a license for only two, and we had only the two mules we were riding. But God sent the ravens to Elijah, and so he sent us this Hottentot, Khamatjie. He worked crops on a share on the same farm as late Dad, but he was luckier with his farming—they live on the smell of an oil rag, those bastards. I don't mean "bastard" in a nasty way. I just mean that Khamatjie, like some others, had a white father or grandfather, you understand. Well, thank God, this Khamatjie pitches up with his Ford pickup and a mincing machine, because he thought he would shoot a zebra. Nobody wants to eat zebra, but when it's sausage it's lovely; you call it beef or koodoo or eland. Late Dad and Khamatjie and I made impala sausages for two days.

In front of white people Dad treated Khamatjie like dirt, but otherwise he was very respectful, because he was always borrowing money from Khamatjie and getting drunk with him. He said Khamatjie didn't mind supplying the brandy so long as he could say he drank with a white man.



The training late Dad gave me in bushcraft and using a rifle came in pretty handy when I was on the South West border doing my army service. The call-up interrupts a man's career, if he's got a career, but a fellow that hasn't had army has missed an experience—encountering the outdoor life; learning about musketry and map-reading and section-leading, and who's what in these little front-line states, and the tribes and the various movements in Angola and Caprivi and Botswana. The big thing, though, is the companionship. Until you've marched with four hundred other chaps all in step, all singing "Sarie Marais" or "Lilli Marlene" or "You can do with your loo loo what you will"; until you've sat with five or six buddies in an ambush, not daring to take a breath in case a guerrilla gets you; until you've done things like that, you don't know what loving your land and your folk is.

Out there, in the bundu, the action is sort of clean, like they say it was in North Africa when we were fighting Rommel in late Dad's war. Not like shooting black school-girls in the bum from inside an armored car. How brave does a fellow have to be for that? I wonder what these township heroes would do if they were faced with Swapo guerrillas like my lot were.

Because I was keen, and liked the bush, I got to be a sergeant, and they gave me six blacks they had scratched up in Damaraland, and sent us off across the border into Angola. An intelligence probe, they said. Just these six blacks and me, and an intelligence corporal called Johan. He had had a course of interrogation training, and his main job was to train these blacks to get information out of prisoners. Scary stuff, man. You've got to hate a person to do it properly.

Our first ten days on patrol yielded nothing. Then, on the eleventh day, I left Johan and the blacks to fix our bivvie for the night while I went ahead for a look-see, at a big granite outcrop about two miles ahead. Just before I got to it, I heard shots from our camp, then some answering shots, and then silence. I hid, and waited quietly. After

five minutes I saw four Swapies, running for all they were worth, along the side of a kopje half a mile away. They disappeared behind a dune and then bunched up on the big granite outcrop before the first Swapie launched himself off it to cross a crevasse. By that time I was ready, and I got him as he jumped. The next one was too close behind to stop, and I dropped him and number three as fast as I could press the trigger. The last one in the bunch pulled back, but I was quick and ready. I hit him, too. I heard the bullet ricochet off the rock, so I reckoned he was probably only wounded.

I was sure the first three would be dead, and I thought, *Late Dad, look at that! Three in midair! And they're not impala, Dad. They're royal game.* Do you know about royal game? Late Dad told me that in the old days, before we became the Republic, anything you were not allowed to shoot, because it was rare or useful, like tickbirds or ibises or oribi, was called royal game. Kids in those days believed that these birds and animals were reserved for the royal family to shoot. Fancy Prince Charles potting away at a flock of egrets or an iguana, eh! So Dad and his friends called desert natives "royal game," because they are wild but you're not allowed to shoot them, see?

Like I told you, I can't bear to think of a gutshot animal, lying in pain for hours. I felt the same way about this guerrilla, but I was on edge, too. They say a wounded lion or buffalo is the most dangerous game in the wild, because he stalks the hunter. A wounded guerrilla must be worse, because he's got a higher IQ, so I circled very cautiously round the granite rock. When I got opposite the crevasse, I could see three bodies, one on top of another, quite still. At eight hundred yards, three in three shots, it's a satisfaction, man.

And there, thank God, was guerrilla number four, just round the corner. He was standing upright in a narrow cleft in the rock, with one foot apparently stuck, and he was gripping his left biceps. A pressure point, I supposed. Through my field glasses I could see that his left sleeve



was a thick mat of blood. So all I had got was his arm. I found myself making excuses, thinking that I had been slow because I used a peep sight. Late Dad always shot over open sights; he reckoned that a sniper's eye aimed his hand, like a cowboy with a pistol, or a kid with a catapult.

The guerrilla's rifle was wedged above his head. For safety's sake I put a bullet into it. That left him unlikely to do much damage. When I edged my way closer, I saw that his leg was held fast in a crack, so he really was stuck and helpless. He was one of those yellow Hottentot types, with spaces between his peppercorns of hair, about my age but as wrinkled as a prune. These Kalahari natives go like that by the time they're twenty; it's the sun, or glands, I don't know. He was wearing a cast-off Cuban tunic.

I climbed up the rock and looked down on him, trying to remember the few words of local lingo I had picked up from my men, but when he heard me, he said in Afrikaans, "Good day, my Baas."

I was pleased, I can tell you. That meant I could interrogate him myself, and, as he was our first prisoner, Johan and my black soldiers would see that I was one step ahead of them, and that I was a sergeant for good reason.

The guerrilla bowed his head and pointed with his good hand. "If you are going to shoot, make it two shots, please, so that I will be properly dead."

"I don't shoot tethered goats," I said.

After a moment or two he looked up. "Can the goat have some water?"

"First, talk."

"Yes, I talk, Baas. What would Baas like to talk about?"

I interrogated him in the way we had been instructed, using trick questions and repetitions, in case he was lying or hiding anything. I prodded his wounded arm once or twice. He bore it as if he had it coming to him, but he didn't appear to keep information back, and when his voice cracked, I passed down my water bottle. His name was Adoons, which is a jokey way of saying Adonis. It is what one calls a pet baboon. The farmer his family had worked for called him that. Eventually his own family stopped using the native name his father had given him. It seemed to belong to someone else, Adoons said.

He had been a hunters' guide, and a shepherd. When his family was pushed off the farm—for sheep stealing, it seemed—he joined the guerrillas who were fighting for Namibian independence. He had only the vaguest idea what the fighting was about. He knew it was against whites, but he had never heard of Namibia. Not surprising, when you think about it. He called it "South West," just as we do. He moved from one guerrilla band to another, depending on whether he liked the band's leader and how much food or loot was available. His present band was under the command of a Ndebele refugee from Zimbabwe. They were supposed to report to a General Kareo, but they had never seen him. I carefully recorded it all in my field notebook.

When I had done with questions, I sat back and lit a cigarette. At the sound of the match he looked up. Smok-

ing or drinking alone is not something a decent man wants to do; it's like making love alone, late Dad used to say. I gave Adoons the cigarette and lit another one for myself.

He exhaled till his chest was flat, and then inhaled the smoke to fill his lungs. He held it for a long time before letting it out, and said, "Thank you, Baas. Baas is a good man."

He smoked in deep gulps, keeping his head down. When he finished the cigarette, he looked up. "Why didn't Baas shoot when I was full of smoke?"

"I told you I don't shoot jackal-bait," I said.

"I can see Baas is a good man, but if Baas's men find me here, they will do bad things to me. Perhaps it will take three days."

"I will tell them you have already talked."

"They will not care. They will torture me to make a game. My people will do it too, if they catch one of your black soldiers. This is not Sunday school, my Baas."

"We don't torture prisoners," I replied angrily. I knew he would not believe me.

"What will Baas do with me?"

The fact was, I didn't know what the hell I could do with Adoons. Once he has been interrogated, a native prisoner is worthless; worse, he is a danger. He would have to be fed and guarded, and if he escaped he could give the enemy all sorts of valuable information. We didn't keep prisoners, except white men and Cubans—you can exchange them or use them for propaganda.

As if he understood my problem, he said, "Has Baas perhaps room for another shepherd on Baas's farm?"

"I haven't got a farm, and if I wanted a shepherd I would not employ a bloody Hottentot rebel."

"It is near sunset. Baas will go soon, before it gets dark. And when Baas goes, the hyenas will come. A hyena can bite right through a man's leg. A living man's leg."

I looked down at his skinny leg, disappearing into the rock cleft, and then climbed down and looked at his imprisoned foot. All I had to do was untie the laces and manipulate his ankle to get his foot out, leaving the boot behind. Then I gave the empty boot a kick, and it came loose too. Adoons wriggled till he found a purchase for his toes and raised himself a few inches.

"Give me your hand, Hottentot," I said. "I'll pull you out."

He put up his hand. I took him by the wrist and he clasped my wrist. With unexpected agility he braced his feet against the side of the cleft and scrambled up. I threw him his boot. When he stood up to catch it his tunic opened to reveal a pistol loose in a leather holster, on a broad, stylish belt round his waist.

He smiled shamefacedly. "I took it from the policeman who arrested me for stealing sheep."

"Is it loaded?"

"Oh, yes. Five bullets. I used one to learn to shoot it, but I've never fired it since. One has to be close to a man."

"You could have shot me."

"Yes, my Baas. The pistol was stuck fast, like me, but when you were asking all those questions and leaning

down to hear what I was saying, the barrel was pointing straight at you."

"Why didn't you shoot?"

"If Baas was dead, I would still be stuck in that rock with no one to help me before the soldiers or the hyenas came."

His wounded arm had been banged as he made his way up. It now began to bleed through the clot, not actively but *clthip, clthip, clthip*. Since I carried three field dressings, I could spare one. I dusted antiseptic powder on Adoons's wound, bandaged it, and gave him one of the pain-killer pills we had been issued.

"I would be a good shepherd for you. It is easy to work well for a kind master. Anyone can see Baas will give good food, and a hut with a roof, and no sjambok whippings. Except for cheeky young men who have been to school."

"Come on, we must find a shelter for the night," I said. I didn't like the thought of the hyenas he had talked about.

"These pills are good. The pain is quiet. Baas is like a doctor, eh? A sheep farmer has to be a doctor. I am very good with karakul ewes at lambing time. Baas knows—for he best fur you must kill the lambs as soon as they are born. Stillborn lambs are better. Their skins shine like black nylon with water spilt on it. It's messy, clubbing and skinning the little things without damaging the pelts. It's sad to hear all those ewes baaing. The meat is fit only for crows and vultures. But the rich ladies want the pelts before they get woolly."

He pointed out an overhanging rock twenty yards away. "Shall we spend the night there? Out of the dew, and it's open on only one side."

As we moved, I picked up dry sticks for kindling, but he put his hand on my arm. "If the soldiers see me in the fire-light, or my people see Baas, they will shoot."

I felt foolish and amateur.

"The dead men have clothes. Shall I fetch some?"

"We'll go together," I said. I wasn't going to get myself ambushed.

We went round the rock to the little cliff where the bodies lay. He whistled in admiration. "Baas shoots like a machine. These dead Ovambos look as if they've been arranged with a forklift truck." He added proudly, "I can drive a forklift. I learned on a sheep ranch."

We collected a couple of goatskins, a bush shirt with only a small patch of blood, a water bottle, and a haversack of boiled ears of corn. There were three rifles. I grabbed two and took the bolts out of them. Adoons had already taken possession of the third. He grinned mischievously as he worked the bolt and demonstrated how he could use his rifle by tucking its butt under his sound arm.

"Now we can help each other, eh, Baas? Like that bird that sits in a crocodile's mouth and cleans bits of meat out from between the teeth. The crocodile does not eat him."

We settled down close together under the overhang and had an ear of corn each, and a pull from my hip flask. My dear old ma gave it to me when I was leaving for the border. "When you put it to your lips, it is your old momma

kissing you," she said. I wondered what she would say if she knew she was also kissing a Swapie Hottentot.

I got sleepy and he shook me. "No sleep tonight," he said. "Listen." We heard sounds of animals round the bodies. "Better we talk. Also, it is good for a man and his mate to chat, isn't it?"

"I thought you fellows didn't want white men to have farms," I said. "You want all the land for yourselves."

"Oh, yes. Yes, that's right. General Kareo says I will have a farm of my own. And a hundred sheep."

"Why stop at a hundred? Why not a thousand? Be a big boss. Make people call you *Mister* Adoons."

"How will I look after a thousand animals? I can't even count twenty sheep without taking stones out of one pocket and putting them in the other. No, not a thousand. Unless—Baas was my foreman." He laughed like a drunkard. "If my people win the war, will Baas be my foreman? Baas could have the big farmhouse and a motor car. Baas need not call me 'Baas,' just 'Mister Adoons.' Everything my foreman wants to do, he can do. Will my foreman be angry if some of the shepherds hide away when the police visit?"

"If your lot were the government, they would be your policemen."

"Policemen are policemen. Dog dung. Always after passes."

"Your lot say there won't be passes anymore."

"No passes! If people don't have passes, how can you trace a stock thief? What will we do if bad Ovambo kaffirs steal my karakuls?"

"That's your problem. Perhaps you'll have to get fierce German guard dogs."

"Oh, yes. That's a clever idea. My foreman will always find a way. Now, let's talk of nice things, not problems. What is Baas's name?"

"Martinus."

"That is a friendly name for a foreman. In the evenings after the shepherds have done their work and the sheep and goats are in their thorn kraals, Mister Adoons and Foreman Martinus will sit together and talk and look at the veld. Ai, it's pretty country, between Platberg and the Boa River. Short sweet grass and big flatcrown thorn trees for shade. Animals eat the pods in the winter. We'll have eland and koodoo and impala and bushpigs, but enough grass for karakul sheep, too."

"Sounds all right," I said.

"In the kloof are wild bees and baboons. Ai, those baboons! When a baboon finds a marula tree where the plums have fermented, he gets as drunk as a man. Ai, those drunk baboons! The leopards eat only baboons, never sheep."

"Any water?"

"Water! The Boa River and big freshwater pans full of barbel and eels and ducks, and widow birds with long black tails like a church deacon, and spur-winged geese on the mud flats. The place is called Raraba. We shall sit and drink buchu brandy and talk. Or just sit silently, like old friends do."

"What the hell would you and I find to talk about?"

"Ai, pals' talk. About the grazing and the government and women and hunting and what happens after you die. I suppose Baas knows lots of Jesus stories."

"I don't like buchu," I said.

"Do you like the kind of brandy called Commando? They say it is good."

"Klipdrif is the best kind."

"Then we will have Klipdrif, Martinus."

"If it's hot and dry, one could irrigate a few acres for a vineyard," I said.

"Does Martinus know about wine?"

"My grandfather used to make wine with grapes from his back yard."

"Ai, but this is lucky! So Foreman Martinus would grow grapes and make sweet wine. They say if you give a girl a bottle of that red Cape wine, her legs open before the bottle is finished. But I like brandy better."

"Me too," I said.

"Sometimes we will give a bottle of wine to the old people, too. On Mister Adoons's farm the laborers can stay even when they are too old to work. And when the rations are given out, the old people get meat and mealie-meal too, just like the others. Is that right, Martinus?"

"If the Baas says so," I said.

AT FIRST LIGHT WE STRETCHED AND SCOUTED. WE heard no sounds of activity. Adoons tore a sleeve off a dead guerrilla's shirt; I made a sling and tied his wounded arm against his chest. He kept a grip on the rifle all the time.

I offered him my flask, and we each took a swallow. He handed me one of the two ears of corn left in the haversack, and pointed south. "Foreman Martinus must walk that way. I will go north."

"Good luck, Mister Adoons. I'll come and visit you at your farm at Raraba after the war, and see if you still need a foreman."

"Ai, Martinus," he said. "We will drink and talk, eh. Ai, how we will talk!" He knocked his rifle barrel against mine, like clinking a glass, and set off.

I slid behind the rock, where I could watch him without exposing myself. Late Dad used to say if you trust a Hottentot, you might as well wear a cobra for a necklace, so I kept my cross hairs on him, expecting him to whirl round any moment, or disappear behind a boulder or thick shrub and perhaps circle round to take me in the rear. However, he walked very deliberately up the hill, and did not dodge behind trees or rocks as an experienced Veld man would, nor did he look back to see what I was doing.

When he reached the top of the kopje, he stood for some moments, silhouetted against the sky, and waved his gun. Challenging me to shoot? When he disappeared over the top, I quickly shifted to another position, a couple of hundred yards away, so that if he crawled round to the side of the kopje, I would be ready for him. By sunup nothing

had happened, so I decided that he was on his way to find his band. He would probably keep the field dressing I had put on his arm and pretend that he had shot a South African soldier.

I found my chaps easily enough—I told them I could have shot three or four of them if I had been a guerrilla—and sent them to see what they could find on the Swapies I had shot; even those fellows sometimes have letters or helpful papers.

You would think a man's second-in-command would want to say a warm word about the marksmanship. The blackies were impressed, but Johan said, "You shouldn't have shot to kill, Sarge. We're not in the humane hunting business, you know. A dead Swapie is NAFI, isn't he?"

He liked showing off his Intelligence jargon, like using NAFI to mean "not available for interrogation."

I shut up about Adoons. My blackies might have been able to pick up his trail and perhaps find him before he rejoined his lot, especially if his wound started bleeding again. Then, if they roughed him up a bit, he could hardly avoid giving the whole story away, and that would mean a court-martial for me, wouldn't it?

We eventually caught a few Swapies. I did not like Johan's attitude, but he was right—a dead prisoner is NAFI—so I shot for the leg and told the men to do the same. I stood by with a submachine gun at the ready during the interrogations, in case any of the prisoners knew about me and Adoons. Fortunately, none did.

WHEN I FINISHED MY ARMY, I TOOK MY DISCHARGE there in South West and went to have a look at the Platberg area, and especially Raraba.

It is nice country, if you like desert, and a man could pick up a thousand hectares cheap from fellows who are getting cold feet about the UN. Also, the market for Persian lamb—that's karakul—is looking up again, now that Greenpeace has stopped women from buying baby seal. Some sheep ranchers say they would send Greenpeace a donation if it were not for the currency restrictions.

I followed the Boa River up to Platberg. The river runs against the mountain cliffs, so no space is left in between for a farm. I thought I must have misunderstood Adoons.

That evening a drunk was lying asleep in the gutter outside the hotel. The doorman laughed when I bent down to shake the man.

"Leave him, Mister," he said. "He's happier in Raraba."

That, I discovered, is what the Hottentots around there call a lullaby, a dreamland that is too nice to be real. At first I was disappointed. Then I thought, just as well. Suppose a man had a nice sheep ranch, and then one day a bloody old yellow Hottentot pitched up and said, "Martinus, old friend, do you remember your Baas, Mister Adoons? I've brought a bottle of Klipdrif brandy. That's the kind you like, isn't it? Let us sit and drink and talk pals' talk."

That would be embarrassing. □



FIRST ENCOUNTERS

FRED ASTAIRE AND COUNT BASIE

BASIE, OF COURSE, wasn't baptized "Count." Neither was Astaire born "Astaire"—his family name was Austerlitz. Of Omaha, yet. Basie—William, that is—came by his title during his jazz apprenticeship in Kansas City. He'd often miss a work session, and the band leader Bennie Moten would storm, "Where is that no 'count Basie?" Where indeed? Bill Basie, won't you please . . .

Which is not to say that he wasn't a prince of a fellow, and Astaire, too. When they met, in New York, in the summer of 1960, to discuss the forthcoming TV special *Astaire Time*, it was like one royal to another. Astaire received him, Basie recalled, in his suite at the St. Regis. "Well, Count Basie! So nice to . . . I'm so happy we could . . . I've been looking forward to . . ." and then a little conversation about building a dance around "Sweet Georgia Brown." "You got it!" Basie said.

Astaire remembers it otherwise—each of them deferring to the other. "You just play and I'll dance," he suggested. "No, no," Basie said, "you dance and I'll play."

There are also two versions of what happened next. The way Basie told it, he flew out to California, went directly to Astaire, and handed him the tape of "Sweet Georgia Brown." It was put on the machine, and Astaire started dancing. Not so, Astaire says. According to Fred, the plane landed; Basie was due at rehearsal, and then overdue. Seems he hightailed it out to the racetrack. Didn't show up till the next morning. "Well, man," he said, "I'm right out o' money. Can you slip me five hundred?"

Astaire did—the money didn't matter—but to Fred rehearsals were sacrosanct. At sixty-one he still worked hard to make dance look easy. And, as he tells it, the Count played hooky again—and again lost! But Astaire was patient. He liked the turf himself; besides, he'd yearned for years to do the blues with Basie. He loaned him his box at the track *and* his chauffeur and, after Basie had played the ponies, fetched him back to play the piano. At the keys the Count was always a winner. And Astaire has never lost a dance yet. —Nancy Caldwell Sorel

Will the stock market crash? History may not repeat itself, argues the author of The Great Crash, but the dynamics of speculation are remorselessly constant, and they, along with other ominous indicators, give no comfort to optimism

THE 1929 PARALLEL

BY JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH

Senator Couzens: Did Goldman, Sachs and Company organize the Goldman Sachs Trading Corporation?

Mr. Sachs: Yes, sir.

Senator Couzens: And it sold its stock to the public?

Mr. Sachs: A portion of it. The firms invested originally in ten per cent of the entire issue for the sum of ten million dollars.

Senator Couzens: And the other ninety per cent was sold to the public?

Mr. Sachs: Yes, sir.

Senator Couzens: At what price?

Mr. Sachs: At a hundred and four. That is the old stock . . . the stock was split two for one.

Senator Couzens: And what is the price of the stock now?

Mr. Sachs: Approximately one and three quarters.

—from the *Senate Hearings on Stock Exchange Practices, 1932*

IN MARCH OF 1929 PAUL M. WARBURG, A FOUNDING PARTNER of the Federal Reserve System and an immensely prestigious banker in his time, called attention to the current orgy, as he said, of “unrestrained speculation” in the stock market and added that were it not brought to an end, there would be a disastrous collapse. His warning was badly received. It was made clear that he did not appreciate the new era in economic well-being that the market was so admirably reflecting; he was said by one exceptionally articulate critic to be “sandbagging American prosperity.” Less eloquent commentators voiced the thought that he was probably short in the market.

There was a decidedly more sympathetic response somewhat later that year to the still remembered observation of Professor Irving Fisher, of Yale, one of the most diversely innovative scholars of his time. Fisher said, “Stock prices have reached what looks like a permanently high plateau.” Fisher was, in fact, long in the market and by some estimates lost between eight and ten million dollars in the almost immediately ensuing crash.

There is here a lesson about the larger constant as regards financial aberration and its consequences. There is a compelling vested interest in euphoria, even, or perhaps especially, when it verges, as in 1929, on insanity. Anyone who speaks or writes on current tendencies in financial markets should feel duly warned. There are, however, some controlling rules in these matters, which are ignored

at no slight cost. Among those suffering most will be those who regard all current warnings with the greatest contempt.

The first rule—and our first parallel with 1929—has to do with the stock market itself and, as it may somewhat formally be called, the dynamics of speculation.

Any long-continued increase in stock prices, such as preceded the 1929 crash and such as we experienced at least until last September, brings a change in the purposes of the participants in the market. Initially the motivating force is from institutions and individuals who buy securities (and bid up prices) because of some underlying circumstance, actual or imagined, that is judged to affect values: The economy as a whole is improving. Inflation as a threat is pending or perhaps receding. The tax prospect seems favorable. Or, mercifully, a business-oriented Administration has come to power in Washington. Most of all, in a time when common-stock dividends are largely a fixed dole to stockholders, interest rates are thought likely to decline. This calls for a compensating increase in the value of stocks if they are to earn only the new going return. Or such matters virtually all comment concerning the market informed and often otherwise, centers.

But as a stock-market boom continues (the same can be true as regards a boom in real estate or even art), there is increasing participation by institutions and people who are attracted by the thought that they can take an upward ride with the prices and get out before the eventual fall. This

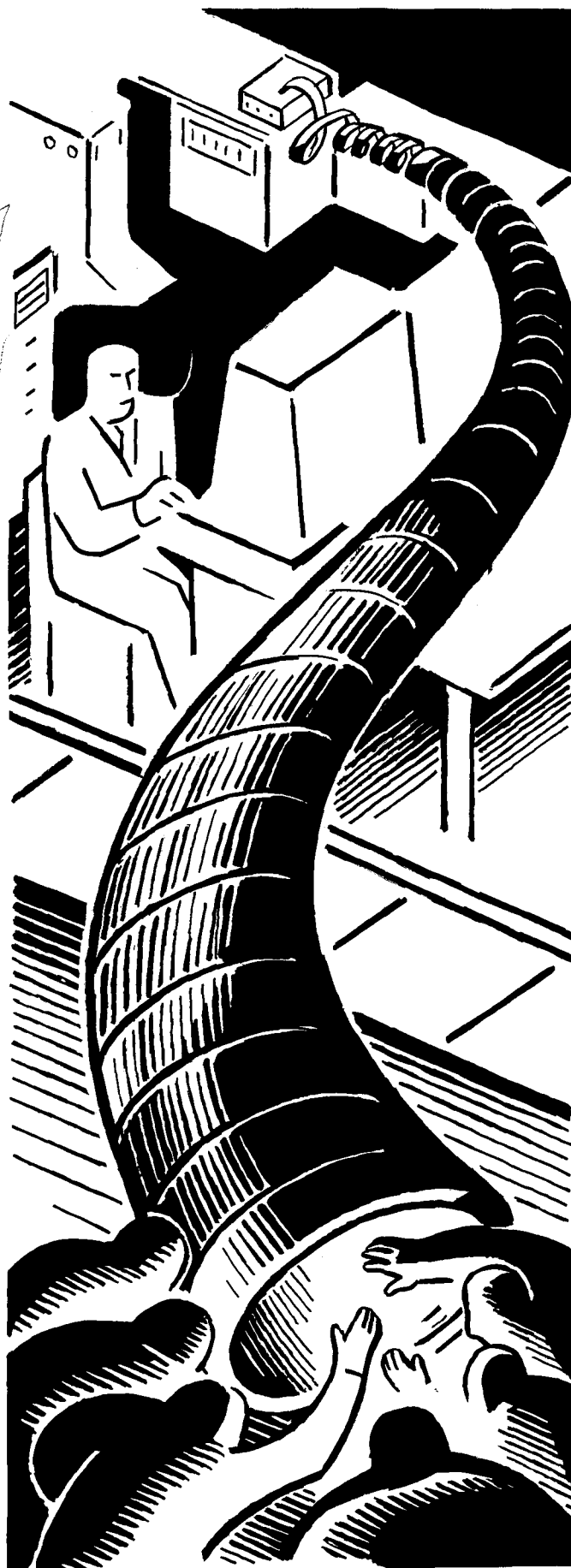
participation, needless to say, drives up prices. And the prices so achieved no longer have any relation to underlying circumstance. Justifying causes for the increases will, also needless to say, be cited by the sadly vulnerable financial analysts and commentators and, alas, the often vulnerable business press. This will persuade yet other innocents to come in for the loss that awaits all so persuaded.

For the loss will come. The market at this stage is inherently unstable. At some point something—no one can ever know when or quite what—will trigger a decision by some to get out. The initial fall will persuade others that the time has come, and then yet others, and then the greater fall will come. Once the purely speculative component has been built into the structure, the eventual result is, to repeat, inevitable.

There will previously have been moments of unease from which there was recovery. These are symptoms of the eventual collapse. In 1928 and through the winter, spring, and summer of 1929 the stock market divorced itself from all underlying reality in the manner just cited. Justification was, of course, asserted: the unique and enduring quality of Coolidge and Hoover prosperity; the infinitely benign effects of the supply-side tax reductions of Secretary of the Treasury Andrew W. Mellon, who was held to be the greatest in that office since Alexander Hamilton; the high-tech future of RCA, the speculative favorite of the time, which so far had not paid a dividend.

But mostly speculators, amateur and otherwise, were getting on for the ride. In the spring of 1929 came the initial indication of instability—a very sharp break in the market. Prices recovered, and in the summer months they cocked up. There was another bad break in September and further uneasy movements. Then, at the end of October, came the compelling rush to get out and therewith the crash. No one knows what precipitated it. No one ever will. A few—Bernard Baruch and, it has long been said, Joseph P. Kennedy—got out first. Most went down with the mob; to an extraordinary degree, this is a game in which there are mainly losers.

The question now, in the winter of 1987, is whether the stock market is or has been repeating its history. There was, early last year, a period of very sharply appreciating prices following an earlier, slower ascent. Then, on September 11 and the days following, came a severe slump, the worst in any recent period. So far (as this is written) there has been no significant recovery. As to the further prospect, no one knows, despite the extreme willingness to say otherwise on the part of many who do not know. What is certain, however, is that once again there existed a speculative dynamic—of people and institutions drawn by the market rise to the thought that it would go up more, that they could ride the rise and get out in time. Perhaps last September signaled the end; perhaps it was an episode in a continuing speculative rise with a worse drop yet to come. What we do know is that speculative episodes never come gently to an end. The wise, though for most the improbable, course is to assume the worst.



Another stock-market collapse would, however—one judges—be less traumatic in its larger effect than was the one in October of 1929. The Great Crash had a shattering effect on investment and consumer spending and eventually on production and employment, leading to the collapse of banks and business firms. Now there are safety nets, as they are called. Unemployment compensation, pensions, farm-income support, and much else would have a general cushioning effect, along with government fiscal support to the economy. There is insurance of bank deposits and the further certainty that any large corporation, if in danger, would be bailed out. Modern socialism, as I've elsewhere said, is when the corporate jets come down on National and Dulles airports.

A SECOND, RATHER STRONGER PARALLEL WITH 1929 IS the present commitment to seemingly imaginative, currently lucrative, and eventually disastrous innovation in financial structures. Here the similarity is striking and involves the same elements as before. In the months and years prior to the 1929 crash there was a wondrous proliferation of holding companies and investment trusts. The common feature of both the holding companies and the trusts was that they conducted no practical operations; they existed to hold stock in other companies, and these companies frequently existed to hold stock in yet other companies. Pyramiding, it was called. The investment trust and the utility pyramid were the greatly admired marvels of the time. Samuel Insull brought together the utility companies of the Midwest in one vast holding-company complex, which he did not understand. Similarly, the Van Sweringen brothers built their vast railroad pyramid. But equally admired were the investment trusts, the formations of Goldman, Sachs and Company and the United Founders Corporation, and—an exceptionally glowing example of the entrepreneurial spirit—those of Harrison Williams, who assembled a combined holding-company and investment-trust system that was thought to have a market value by the summer of 1929 of around a billion dollars. There were scores of others.

The pyramids of Insull and the Van Sweringens were a half dozen or more companies deep. The stock of the operating utility or railroad was held by a holding company. This company then sold bonds and preferred stock and common stock to the public, retaining for itself enough of the common stock for control. The exercise was then repeated—a new company, more bonds and stock to the public, control still retained in a majority or minority holding of the stock of the new creation. And so forth up the line, until an insignificant investment in the common stock of the final company controlled the whole structure.

The investment trusts were similar, except that their ultimate function was not to operate a railroad or a utility but only to hold securities. In December of 1928 Goldman, Sachs and Company created the Goldman Sachs Trading Corporation. It sold securities to the public but retained

enough common stock for control. The following July the trading corporation, in association with Harrison Williams, launched the Shenandoah Corporation. Securities were similarly sold to the public; a controlling interest remained with the trading corporation. Then Shenandoah, in the last days of the boom, created the Blue Ridge Corporation. Again preferred stock and common were sold to the public; the controlling wedge of common stock remained now with Shenandoah. Shenandoah, as before, was controlled by the trading corporation, and the trading corporation by Goldman Sachs. The stated purpose of these superior machinations was to bring the financial genius of the time to bear on investment in common stocks and to share the ensuing rewards with the public.

No institutions ever excited more admiration. The creators of the investment trusts were men of conceded as well as self-admitted genius, and were believed to have a strong instinct for the public interest. John J. Raskob, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee in those days, thought an investment trust might be created in which the toiling masses would invest from their weekly earnings. He outlined the proposal in a *Ladies' Home Journal* article titled "Everybody Ought to Be Rich."

In all these operations debt was incurred to purchase common stock that, in turn, provided full voting control. The debt was passive as to control; so was the preferred stock, which conferred no voting rights. The minority interests in the common stock sold to the public had no effect of power either. The remaining, retained investment in common stock exercised full authority over the whole structure. This was leverage. A marvelous thing. Leverage also meant that any increase in the earnings of the ultimate companies would flow back with geometric force to the originating company. That was because along the way the debt and preferred stock in the intermediate companies held by the public extracted only their fixed contractual share; any *increase* in revenue and value flowed through to the ultimate and controlling investment in common stock.

It was a grave problem, however, that in the event of failing earnings and values, leverage would work fully as powerfully in reverse. All income and value, and in practice more, would be absorbed by the outer debt and preferred shares; for the originating company there would remain literally—very literally—nothing. But of this in 1929 no one, or not many, thought; a rising market combined with the managerial and investment genius of the men who built these structures made any such concern seem irrelevant in the extreme.

Here the parallel: after fifty-seven years investment trusts, called closed-end funds, are now coming back into fashion, although still, I would judge, in a rather modest way as compared with 1929. The more exciting parallel is in the rediscovery of leverage. Leverage is again working its wonders. Not in utility pyramids: these in their full 1929 manifestation are forbidden by law. And the great investment houses, to be sure, still raise capital for new and

expanding enterprises. But that is not where the present interest and excitement lie. These lie in the wave of corporate takeovers, mergers, and acquisitions and the *leveraged* buy-outs. And in the bank loans and bond issues, not excluding the junk bonds, that are arranged to finance these operations.

The common feature of all these activities is the creation of debt. In 1985 alone some \$139 billion dollars' worth of mergers and acquisitions was financed, much of it with new borrowing. More, it would appear, was so financed last year. Some \$100 billion in admittedly perilous junk bonds (rarely has a name been more of a warning) was issued to more than adequately trusting investors. This debt has a first claim on earnings; in its intractable way, it will absorb all earnings (and claim more) at some astrident time in the future.

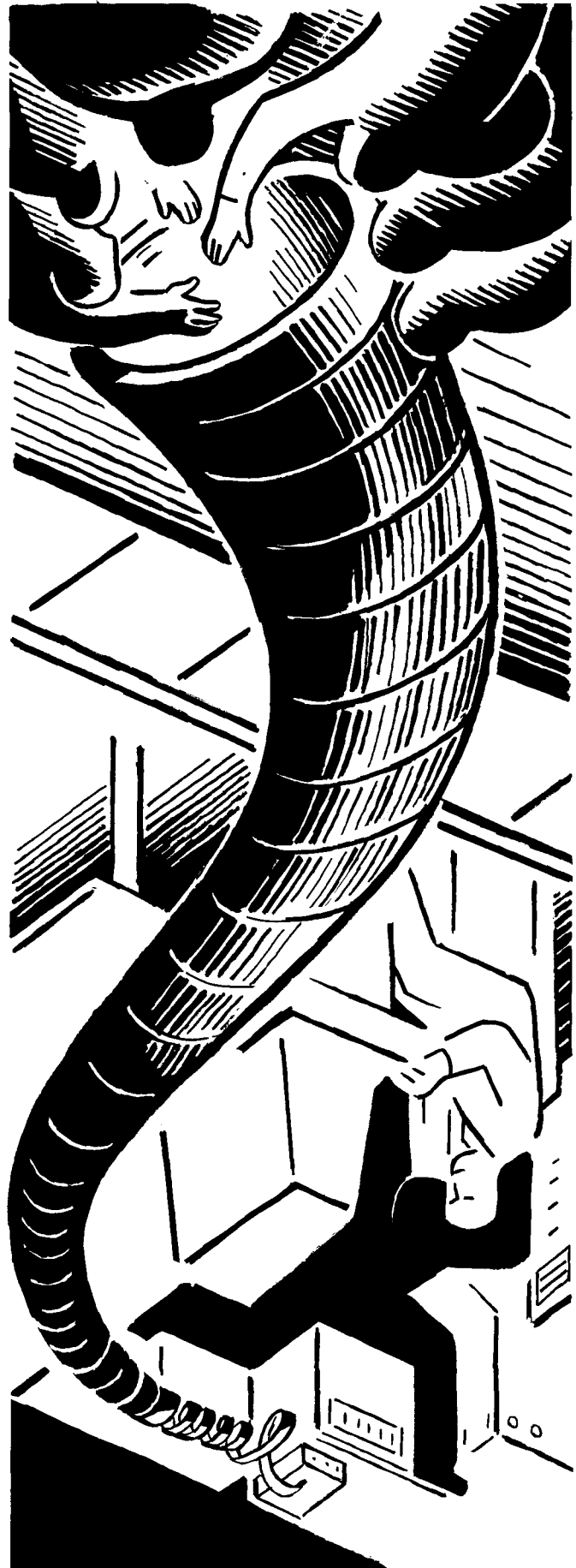
That time will come. Greatly admired for the energy and ingenuity it now and recently has displayed, this development (the mergers and their resulting debt), to be adequately but not unduly blunt, will eventually be regarded as no less insane than the utility and railroad pyramiding and the investment-trust explosion of the 1920s.

Ever since the *Compagnie d'Occident* of John Law (which was formed to search for the highly exiguous gold deposits of Louisiana); since the wonderful exfoliation of enterprises of the South Sea Bubble; since the outbreak of investment enthusiasm in Britain in the 1820s (a company to drain the Red Sea with a view to recovering the treasure abandoned by the Egyptians after the crossing of the Jews"); and on down to the 1929 investment trusts, the offshore funds and Bernard Cornfeld, and yet on to Penn Square and the Latin American loans—nothing has been more remarkable than the susceptibility of the investing public to financial illusion and the like-mindedness of the most reputable of bankers, investment bankers, brokers, and free-lance financial geniuses. Nor is the reason far to seek. Nothing so gives the illusion of intelligence as personal association with large sums of money.

It is, alas, an illusion. The mergers, acquisitions, takeovers, leveraged buy-outs, their presumed contribution to economic success and market values, and the burden of debt that they incur are the current form of that illusion. They will one day—again, no one can say when—be so recognized. A fall in earnings will render the debt burden insupportable. A minor literature will marvel at the earlier retreat from reality, as is now the case with the Penn Square fiasco and the loans to Latin America.

THE THIRD PARALLEL BETWEEN PRESENT AND PAST, which will be vividly and also painfully revealed, concerns one of the great constants of capitalism. That is its tendency to single out for the most ostentatious punishment those on whom it once seemed to lavish its greatest gifts.

In the years before the 1929 crash the system accorded fortune and prestige to a greatly featured group of men—



to Arthur W. Cutten, M. J. Meehan, Bernard E. ("Sell'em Ben") Smith, and Harry F. Sinclair, all market operators of major distinction; also to Charles E. Mitchell, the head of the National City Bank as it then was, and Albert Wiggin, the head of the Chase National Bank, both deeply involved in the market on their own behalf; to Ivar Kreuger, the Match King, international financier (and sometime forger of government bonds); and to Richard Whitney, soon to become president of the New York Stock Exchange and its most uncompromising public defender.

All suffered a fearful fall after the crash. Called before a congressional committee, Cutten, Meehan, and Sinclair all had grave lapses of memory. Mitchell and Wiggin, the great bankers, were both sacked; Mitchell went through long and tedious proceedings for alleged income-tax evasion, and the large pension Wiggin had thoughtfully arranged for himself was revoked. Ivar Kreuger went out one day in Paris, bought a gun, and shot himself. Harry Sinclair eventually went to jail, and so, for embezzlement, did Richard Whitney. Whitney's passage into Sing Sing, in dignified, dark-vested attire, wearing, it has been said, the Porcellian pig of his Harvard club, was one of the more widely circulated news portraits of the time.

The young professionals now engaged in much-admired and no less publicized trading, merger takeover, buy-back, and other deals, as they are called, will one day, we can be sadly sure, suffer a broadly similar fate. Some will go to jail; some are already on the way, for vending, buying, and using inside information. Given the exceptionally oblique line between legitimate and much-praised financial knowledge and wrongfully obtained and much-condemned inside information, more are known to be at risk. But for most the more mundane prospect is unemployment and professional obloquy, and for some, personal insolvency. Expensive apartments will become available on the upper East Side of Manhattan; there will be property transfers in the Hamptons. David Stockman, said by the press to have a car sent out for him to Connecticut each morning by his employer, may end up taking the train.

S. C. Gwynne, a young onetime banker, tells in his excellent book *Selling Money* of his services in the late seventies and early eighties to the international division of Cleveland Trust, now AmeriTrust, a relatively conservative player on the world scene. He journeyed from Manila to Algiers and Riyadh in search of loans. It was a time of admiring reference to the recycling of funds on deposit from the OPEC countries to the capital-hungry lands. And he tells us that

by December 31, 1982, more than \$200 million in loans would be in trouble in Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela, Poland, and the Philippines. . . . By 1984, thirteen of the seventeen officers who had staffed the [international] division in 1980 would be gone, and Ben Bailey, [the] deputy manager, and most of the members of the senior credit committee that approved the foreign loans would take early retirements.

The end for those in the present play will come when either recession or a tight-money crunch to arrest inflation makes the debt load they have so confidently created no longer tolerable. Then there will be threats of default and bankruptcy, a drastic contraction in operations, no bonuses, a trimming of pay and payrolls, and numerous very, very early retirements. And from many who did not themselves foresee the result, there will be a heavy-handed condemnation of the failure to see that this would be the result. For those who engage in trading operations at the investment houses the day of reckoning could be when the market goes down seemingly without limit. Then will be rediscovered the oldest rule of Wall Street: financial genius is before the fall.

THE FINAL PARALLEL WITH 1929 IS A MORE GENERAL one; it has broadly to do with tax reduction and investment incentives. In the Coolidge years, as noted, Andrew Mellon reduced taxes on the affluent. The declared purpose was to stimulate the economy; more precise reference to saving, investment, and economic growth was for the future. The unannounced purpose was, as ever, to lessen the tax bite on the most bitten. By the summer of 1929 the economy was, nonetheless, stagnant—even in slight recession. (To this, rather than to the built-in inevitabilities of speculation, some economists looking for deeper substance later attributed the crash.) There is every likelihood that a very large part of the enhanced personal revenues from the tax reduction simply went into the stock market, rather than into real capital formation or even improved consumer demand.

So again now. Funds have been flowing into the stock market to be absorbed by the deals aforementioned or the cost of making them. Some, perhaps much, of this money—no one, to be sure, knows how much—is from the supply-side tax reductions. Real capital spending is currently flat, even declining—a depressing fact.

From the mergers, acquisitions, and buy-backs, it is not reasonably well agreed, comes no increase at all in industrial competence. The young men who serve in the great investment houses render no service to investment decisions, product innovation, production, automation, or labor relations in the companies whose securities they shuffle. They have no real concern with such matters. They do float some issues for new ventures or expanded operations; one concedes this while noting again how dismal is the present showing on real capital investment. Mostly their operations absorb savings into an inherently sterile activity.

History may not repeat itself, but some of its lessons are inescapable. One is that in the world of high and confident finance little is ever really new. The controlling fact is not the tendency to brilliant invention; the controlling fact is the shortness of the public memory, especially when it contends with a euphoric desire to forget. □

THE BAD PHYSICIAN

The body in health, the body in sickness,
 inscribing
 its versatile logic till the least

of us must, willy nilly, learn
 to read.
 And even in error, as when

the mutant multiplies, or first
 my right eye,
 now my left, is targeted

for harm by the system
 designed
 to keep it safe—

even in error the body
 wields cunning
 as birches in leaf wield light.

The child who swallows the amnion now
 will swallow milk
 by winter. The milk

can find a use for me but not
 for my belief,
 nor yours, and it beggars the best

of our purposes. Within us
 without us,
 this life is already beyond us,

so what must it make of the man who cures
 by rote?
 My friend's young daughter moved

with a slightly muddled
 gait,
 and then her tongue

and then her hands
 unlearned
 their freedom, so newly

acquired. Unlearned with great
 labor
 while the tumor thrived,

and all the elixirs in Mexico
 could not
 revise her sentence by a day.

You who make your living at
 the body's re-
 versible deviations,

what will you say to a six-
 year-old
 when all her bright first lessons

are defaced? Even the skeptic
 in his lab,
 who works at the friable boundaries

of our common
 legibility
 and does the work that I trust

best, is bound to frame his question
 in the pure,
 distorting light of hope.

The beautiful cells dividing have
 no mind
 for us, but look

what a ravishing mind
 they make
 and what a heart we've nursed

in its shade, who love
 that most
 which leaves us most behind.

—Linda Gregerson



A Short Story



LONG DISTANCE

BY JANE SMILEY

KIRBY CHRISTIANSON IS STANDING UNDER THE SHOWER, fiddling with the hot-water spigot and thinking four apparently simultaneous thoughts: that there is never enough hot water in this apartment, that there was always plenty of hot water in Japan, that Mieko will be here in four days, and that he is unable to control Mieko's expectations of him in any way. The thoughts of Mieko are accompanied by a feeling of anxiety as strong as the sensation of the hot water, and he would like the water to flow through him and wash it away. He turns from the shower head and bends backward, so that the stream can pour over his face.

When he shuts off the shower, the phone is ringing. A sense that it has been ringing for a long time—can a mechanical noise have a quality of desperation?—propels him naked and dripping into the living room. He picks up the phone and his caller, as he has suspected, is Mieko. Perhaps he is psychic; perhaps this is only a coincidence, or perhaps no one else has called him in the past week or so.

The connection has a crystalline clarity that tricks him into not allowing for the satellite delay. He is already annoyed after the first hello. Mieko's voice is sharp, high, very Japanese, although she speaks superb English. He says, "Hello, Mieko," and he *sounds* annoyed, as if she called him too much, although she has only called once to give him her airline information and once to change it. Unnaturally attuned to the nuances of his voice, she says, "Oh, Kirby," and falls silent.

Now there will be a flurry of tedious apologies, on both sides. He is tempted to hang up on her, call her back, and blame his telephone—faulty American technology. But he isn't be certain that she is at home. So he says, "Hello, Mieko? Hello, Mieko? Hello, Mieko?" more and more loudly, as if her voice were fading. His strategy works. She shouts, "Can you hear me, Kirby? I can hear you, Kirby."

He holds the phone away from his ear. He says, "That's better. Yes, I can hear you now."

"Kirby, I cannot come. I cannot go through with my plan. My father has lung cancer, we learned this morning."

He has never met the father, has seen the mother and the sister only from a distance, at a department store.

"Can you hear me, Kirby?"

"Yes, Mieko. I don't know what to say."

"You don't have to say anything. I have said to my moth-

er that I am happy to stay with her. She is considerably relieved."

"Can you come later, in the spring?"

"My lie was that this Melville seminar I was supposed to attend would be offered just this one time, which was why I had to go now."

"I'm sorry."

"I know that I am only giving up pleasure. I know that my father might die."

As she says this, Kirby is looking out his front window at the snowy roof of the house across the street, and he understands at once from the hopeless tone of her voice that to give up the pleasure that Mieko has promised herself is harder than to die. He understands that in his whole life he has never given up a pleasure that he cherished as much as Mieko cherished this one. He understands that in a just universe the father would rather die alone than steal such a pleasure from his daughter. All these thoughts occur simultaneously, and are accompanied by a lifting of the anxiety he felt in the shower. She isn't coming. She is never coming. He is off the hook. He says, "But it's hard for you to give it up, Mieko. It is for me, too. I'm sorry."

The sympathetic tones in his voice wreck her self-control, and she begins to weep. In the five months that Kirby knew Mieko in Japan, and in the calls between them since, she has never shed a tear, hardly ever let herself be caught in a low moment, but now she weeps with absolute abandon, in long, heaving sobs, saying, "Oh, oh, oh," every so often. Once, the sounds fade, as if she has put down the phone, but he does not dare hang up, does not even dare move the phone from one ear to the other. This attentive listening is what he owes to her grief, isn't it? If she had come, and he had disappointed her, as he would have, this is how she would have wept in solitude after swallowing her disappointment in front of him. But her father has done it, not him. He can give her a little company after all. He presses the phone so hard to his ear that it hurts. The weeping goes on for a long time and he is afraid to speak and interfere with what will certainly be her only opportunity to give way to her feelings. She gives one final wailing "Ohhh" and begins to cough and choke. Finally she quiets, and then sighs. After a moment of silence she says, "Kirby, you should not have listened."

"How could I hang up?"

"A Japanese man would have."

"You sound better, if you are back to comparing me with Japanese men."

"I am going to hang up now, Kirby. I am sorry not to come. Good-bye."

"Don't hang up."

"Good-bye."

"Mieko?"

"Good-bye, Kirby."

"Call me! Call me again!" He is not sure that she hears him. He looks at the phone and then puts it on the cradle.

TWO HOURS LATER HE IS ON THE HIGHWAY. THIS IS, after all, two days before Christmas, and he is on his way to spend the holidays with his two brothers and their wives and children, whom he hasn't seen in years. He has thought little about this visit, beyond buying a few presents. Mieko's coming loomed, imposing and problematic. They had planned to drive out west together—she had paid extra so that she could land in Minneapolis and return from San Francisco—and he had looked forward to seeing the mountains again. They had made reservations on a bus that carries tourists into Yellowstone Park in the winter, to look at the smoky geysers and the wildlife and the snow. The trip would have seemed very American to her—buffalo and men in cowboy boots and hats. But it seemed very Japanese to him—deep snow, dark pines, sharp mountains.

The storm rolls in suddenly, the way it sometimes does on I-35 in Iowa, startling him out of every thought except alertness. Snow swirls everywhere, blotting out the road, the other cars, sometimes even his own front end. The white of his headlights reflects back at him, so that he seems to be driving into a wall. He can hardly force himself to maintain thirty-five miles an hour, although he knows he must. To stop would be to invite a rear-end collision. And the shoulder of the road is invisible. Only the white line, just beside the left front corner of the car, reveals itself intermittently as the wind blows the snow off the pavement. He ejects the tape he is playing and turns on the radio, to the state weather station. He notices that his hand is shaking. He could be killed. The utter blankness of the snowy whirl gives him a way of imagining what it would be like to be dead. He doesn't like the feeling.

He remembers reading two winters ago about an elderly woman whose son dropped her off at her apartment. She discovered that she had forgotten her key, and with the wind-chill factor at eighty below zero, she froze before she got to the manager's office. The winter before that a kid who broke his legs in a snowmobile accident crawled three miles to the nearest farmhouse, no gloves, only a feed cap on his head.

Twenty below, thirty below—the papers always make a big deal of the temperature. Including wind chill, seventy, a hundred below. Kirby carries a flashlight, a down sleeping bag, a sweatshirt that reads UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA, gloves and mittens. His car has new tires, front-wheel

drive, and plenty of antifreeze. He has a thermos of coffee. But the horror stories roll through his mind anyway. A family without boots or mittens struggles two miles to a McDonald's through high winds, blowing snow, thirty below. *Why would they travel in that weather?* Kirby always thinks when he reads the papers, but of course they do. He does. Always has.

A gust takes the car, just for a second, and Kirby grips the wheel more tightly. The same gust twists the enveloping snow aloft and reveals the Clear Lake rest stop. Kirby is tempted to stop, tempted not to. He has, after all, never died before, and he has driven through worse than this. He passes the rest stop. Lots of cars are huddled there; but then, lots of cars are still on the highway. Maybe the storm is letting up.

As soon as he is past the rest stop, he thinks of Mieko, her weeping. She might never weep like that again, even if she heard of his death. The connection in her mind between the two of them, the connection that she allowed to stretch into the future despite all his admonitions and all her resolutions, is broken now. Her weeping was the sound of its breaking. And if he died here, in the next ten minutes, how would she learn of it? His brothers wouldn't call her, not even if she were still coming, because they didn't know she had planned to come. And if she were ever to call him back, she would get only a disconnected message and would assume that he had moved. He can think of no way that she could hear of his death, even though no one would care more than she would. These thoughts fill him with self-pity, but at least they drive out the catalogue of horror: station wagon skids into bridge abutment, two people are killed, two paralyzed from the neck down, mother survives unharmed, walks to nearby farmhouse. Kirby weighs the boredom and good fellowship he will encounter sitting out the storm at a truck stop against possible tragedy. Fewer cars are on the road; more are scattered on the median strip. Inertia carries him onward. He is almost to Minnesota, after all, where they really know how to take care of the roads. He will stop at the tourist center and ask about conditions.

But he drives past the tourist center by mistake, lost in thought. He decides to stop in Faribault. But by then the snow seems to be tapering off. Considering the distance he has traveled, Minneapolis isn't far now. He checks the odometer. Only fifty miles or so. An hour and a half away at this speed. His mind eases over the numbers with customary superhighway confidence, but at once he imagines himself reduced to walking, walking in this storm, with only a flashlight, a thermos of coffee, a University of Nebraska sweatshirt—and the distance swells to infinity. Were he reduced to his own body, his own power, it might be too far to walk just to find a telephone.

For comfort he calls up images of Japan and southern China, something he often does. That he produces these images is the one tangible change that his travels have made in him. So many human eyes have looked upon every scene there for so many eons that every sight has an ar

anged quality: a flowering branch in the foreground, a precipitous mountainside in the background, a small bridge between. A path, with two women in red kimonos, that winds up a hillside. A white room with pearly rice-paper walls and a futon on the mat-covered floor, branches of cherry blossoms in a vase in the corner. They seem like pictures, but they are scenes he has actually looked upon: on a three-day trip out of Hong Kong into southern China, with some other teachers from his school on a trip to Kyoto, and at Akira's house. Akira was a fellow teacher at his school who befriended him. His house had four rooms, two Japanese style and two Western style.

He remembers, of course, other scenes of Japan—acres of buses, faces staring at his Westernness, the polite but bored rows of students in his classroom—when he is trying to decide whether to go back there. But these are not fixed, have no power; they are just memories, like memories of bars in Lincoln or the pig houses on his grandfather's farm.

AND SO, HE SURVIVES THE storm. He pulls into the driveway of Harold's new house, one he has not seen, though it is in a neighborhood he remembers from junior high school. The storm is over. Harold has his snowblower out and is taking a path from the driveway to his front door. With the noise and because his back is turned, he is unaware of Kirby's arrival. Kirby stops the car, retches, and looks at his watch. Several hours for a four-hour trip. Kirby lifts his shoulders and shakes his head but does not beep his horn just yet. The fact is that he has frightened himself with the blinding snow, the miles of slick and featureless landscape, thoughts of Japan, and the thousands and thousands of miles between here and there. His car might be a marble that has rolled, only by luck, into a safe corner. He presses his fingers against his eyes and stills his breathing.

Harold turns around, grins, and shuts off the snowblower. It is a Harold identical to the Harold that Kirby has always known. Same bright snowflake ski hat, same bright ski clothing. Harold has spent his whole life skiing and ski-jumping. His bushy beard grows up to the hollows of his eyes, and when he leans into the car his moustache is, as always, crusted with ice.

"Hey!" he says. He backs away, and Kirby opens the driver door.

"Made it!" Kirby says. That is all he will say about the trip. The last thing he wants to do is start a discussion about near misses. Compared with some of Harold's near misses, this is nothing. In fact, near misses on the highway aren't worth mentioning unless a lot of damage has been done to the car. Kirby knows of near misses that Harold has

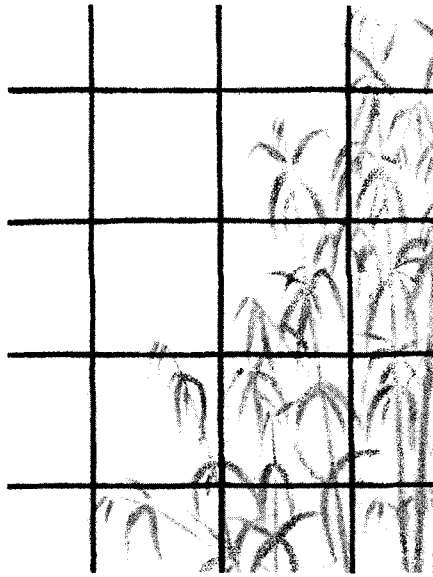
never dared to describe to anyone besides him, because they show a pure stupidity that even Harold has the sense to be ashamed of.

Over dinner, sweet and savory Nordic fare that Kirby is used to but doesn't much like, he begins to react to his day. The people around the table, his relatives, waver in the smoky candlelight, and Kirby imagines that he can feel the heat of the flames on his face. The other people at the table seem unfamiliar. Leanne, Harold's wife, he has seen only once, at their wedding. She is handsome and self-possessed-looking, but she sits at the corner of the table, like a guest in her own house. Eric sits at the head, and Mary Beth, his wife, jumps up and down to replenish the food. This assumption of primogeniture is a peculiarity of Eric's that has always annoyed Kirby, but even aside from that

they have never gotten along. Eric does his best—earnest handshake and smile each time they meet, two newsy letters every year, pictures of the children (known between Harold and Kirby as "the little victims"). Eric has a Ph.D. from Columbia in American history, but he does not teach. He writes for a conservative think tank—articles that appear on the op-ed pages of newspapers and in the think tank's own publications. He specializes in "the family." Kirby and Harold have made countless jokes at Eric's expense. Kirby knows that more will be made this trip, if only in the form of conspiratorial looks, rolling eyes. Eric's hobby—Mary Beth's, too, for they share everything—is developing

each nuance of his Norwegian heritage into a fully realized ostentation. Mary Beth is always busy, usually baking. That's all Kirby knows about her, and all he cares to know.

Across the table Anna, their older daughter, pale, blue-eyed, cool, seems to be staring at him, but Kirby can hardly see her. He is thinking about Mieko. Kirby looks at his watch. It is very early morning in Osaka. She is probably about to wake up. Her disappointment will have receded hardly a particle, will suck her down as soon as she thuds into consciousness. "Oh, oh, oh": he can hear her cries as clearly as if they were vibrating in the air. He is amazed at having heard such a thing, and he looks carefully at the women around the table. Mieko would be too eager to please here, always looking after Mary Beth and Leanne, trying to divine how she might be helpful. Finally, Mary Beth would speak to her with just a hint of sharpness, and Mieko would be crushed. Her eyes would seek Kirby's for reassurance, and he would have none to give. She would be too little, smaller even than Anna, and her voice would be too high and quick. These thoughts give him such pain that he stares for relief at Kristin, Eric's youngest, age three, who is humming over her dinner. She is round-faced and paunchy, with dark hair cut straight across her fore-



head and straight around her collar. From time to time she and Leanne exchange merry glances.

Harold is beside him; that, at least, is familiar and good, and it touches Kirby with a pleasant sense of expectation, as if Harold, at any moment, might pass him a comic book or a stick of gum. In fact, Harold does pass him something—an icy cold beer, which cuts the sweetness of the food and seems to adjust all the figures around the table so that they stop wavering.

OF COURSE HIS EYES OPEN WELL BEFORE DAYLIGHT, but he dares not move. He is sharing a room with Harold the younger, Eric's son, whose bed is between his and the door. He worries that if he gets up he will stumble around and crash into walls and wake Harold. The digits on the clock beside Harold's bed read 5:37, but when Kirby is quiet, he can hear movement elsewhere in the house. When he closes his eyes, the footsteps present themselves as a needle and thread, stitching a line through his thoughts. He has just been driving. His arms ache from gripping the wheel. The car slides diagonally across the road, toward the median. It slides and slides, through streams of cars, toward a familiar exit, the Marshalltown exit, off to the left, upward. His eyes open again. The door of the room is open, and Anna is looking in. After a moment she turns and goes away. It is 6:02. Sometime later Leanne passes with Isaac, the baby, in her arms.

Kirby cannot bear to get up and face his brothers and their families. As always, despair presents itself aesthetically. The image of Harold's and Leanne's living room, matching plaid wing chairs and couch, a triple row of wooden pegs by the maple front door, seems to Kirby the image of the interior of a coffin. The idea of spending five years, ten years, a lifetime, with such furniture makes him gasp. But his own apartment, armchair facing the television, which sits on a spindly coffee table, is worse. Mary Beth and Eric's place, where he has been twice, is the

worst, because it's pretentious; they have antique wooden trunks and high-backed benches painted blue with stenciled flowers in red and white. Everything, everything, they own is blue and white, or white and blue, and Nordic primitif. Now even the Japanese images he calls up are painful. The pearly white Japanese-style room in Akira's house was bitterly cold in the winter, and he spent one night there only half-sleeping, his thighs drawn to his chest, the perimeters of the bed too cold even to touch. His head throbbing, Kirby lies pinned to the bed by impossibility. He literally can't summon up a room, a stick of furniture, that he can bear to think of. Harold the younger rolls over and groans, turning his twelve-year-old face toward Kirby's. His mouth opens and he breathes noisily. It is 6:27.

Not until breakfast, when Leanne sets a bowl of raisin bran before him on the table, does he recall the appearance of Anna in the door to his room, and then it seems odd, especially when, ten minutes later, she enters the kitchen in her bathrobe, yawning. Fifth grade. Only fifth grade. He can see that now, but the night before, and in the predawn darkness, she had seemed older, more threatening, the way girls get at fourteen and fifteen. "Cereal sweetie?" Leanne says, and Anna nods, scratching. She sits down without a word and focuses on the back of the Cheerios box. Kirby decides that he was dreaming and puts the incident out of his mind.

Harold, of course, is at his store, managing the Christmas rush, and the house is less festive in his absence. Eric has sequestered himself in Leanne's sewing room, with his computer, and as soon as Anna stands up from breakfast Mary Beth begins to arrange the day's kitchen schedule. Kirby rinses his cup and goes into the living room. It is nine in the morning, and the day stretches before him empty. He walks through the plaid living room to the window, where he regards the outdoor thermometer. It reads four degrees below zero. Moments later it is five degrees below zero. Moments after that he is standing beside Har-

PRAYER TO SPARROW IN TWO SEASONS

Little tongue click, beggar at the redwood table,
how is it your fall makes so deep an impression
in the book black as loam, and as fragrant?

Song as warning becomes you, the sudden tilt
of your beak sounds like the first star coming on
one sweet May sky. There is a map through the trees

engraved on your skull—bone I could wear as a ring—
and your feet are black glass the serpent envies.
Once I held (Biology 101) your heart in my palm,

a tiny red clock, and asked for enlargement, life
bigger than life. This winter I pray only your,
intercession, a handful of seeds flung over snow.

And watch as you peck the white crust, one eye
on my window, one for each seed, and nothing but God
own poverty keeping you warm, keeping you.

—Jeffrey Skinner

old's bar, pouring himself a glass of bourbon. He has already drunk it when Anna appears in the doorway, dressed now, and staring at him again. She makes him think of Mieko again—though the child is blonde and self-contained, she is Mieko's size. Last evening, when he was hinking of Mieko, he was looking at Anna. He says, attempting jovial warmth, "Good morning, Anna. Why do you keep staring at me?"

She is startled. "I don't. I was looking at the bookshelves."

"But you stared at me last night, at dinner. And you came to the door of my room early this morning. I know because I was awake."

"No, I didn't." But then she softens, and says with eager curiosity, "Are you a socialist?"

While Kirby is trying not to laugh, he hears Mary Beth ing from the kitchen. "Anna? Your brother is going sled-ing. You want to go?"

Anna turns away before Kirby can answer, and mounts the stairs. A "No!" floats, glassy and definite, from the second floor.

Kirby sits down in one of the plaid armchairs and gazes at an arrangement of greenery and shiny red balls and candles that sits on a table behind the couch. He gazes and gazes, contemplating the notion of Eric and Mary Beth discussing his politics and his life. He is offended. He knows that if he were to get up and do something he would top being offended, but he gets up only to pour himself another drink. It is nearly ten. Books are around everywhere, and Kirby picks one up.

People keep opening doors and coming in, having been elsewhere. Harold comes home for lunch; Leanne and Isaac return from the grocery store and the hardware store; Harold the younger stomps in, covered with snow from sledding, eats a sandwich, and stomps out again. Eric opens the sewing-room door, takes a turn through the house, goes back in again. He does this three times, each time failing to speak to Kirby, who is sitting quietly. Perhaps he does not see him. He is an old man, Kirby thinks, and his rear has spread considerably in the past four years; he is thirty-six going on fifty, round-shouldered, wearing slacks rather than jeans. What a jerk.

But then Kirby's bad mood twists into him, and he lets his head drop on the back of his chair. What is a man? Kirby thinks. What is a man, what is a man? It is someone, Eric would say, who votes, owns property, has a wife, works. It is someone, Harold would say, who can chop wood all day and make love all night, who can lift his twenty-five-pound son above his head on the palm of his hand.

After lunch the men all vanish again, even Isaac, who is taking a nap. In various rooms the women do things. They make no noise. Harold's house is the house of a wealthy man, Kirby realizes. It is large enough to be silent and neat most of the time, the sort of house Kirby will never own. It is Harold and Eric who are alike now. Only Kirby's being does not extend past his fingertips and toes to family, real state, reputation.

SOMETIME IN THE AFTERNOON, WHEN KIRBY IS STILL sitting quietly and his part of the room is shadowed by the movement of the sun to the other side of the house, Kristin comes in from the kitchen, goes straight to the sofa, pulls off one of the cushions, and begins to jump repeatedly from the cushion to the floor. When he says, "Kristin, what are you doing?" she is not startled. She says, "Jumping."

"Do you like to jump?"

She says, "It's a beautiful thing to do," in her matter-of-fact, deep, three-year-old voice. Kirby can't believe she knows what she is saying. She jumps three or four more times and then runs out again.

At dinner she is tired and tiresome. When Eric tells her to eat a bite of her meat (ham cooked with apricots), she looks him right in the face and says, "No."

"One bite," he says. "I mean it."

"No. I mean it." She looks up at him. He puts his napkin on the table and pushes back his chair. In a moment he has swept her through the doorway and up the stairs. She is screaming. A door slams and the screaming is muffled. When he comes down and seats himself, carefully laying his napkin over his slacks, Anna says, "It's her body."

The table quiets. Eric says, "What?"

"It's her body."

"What does that mean?"

"She should have control over her own body. Food. Other stuff. I don't know." She has started strong but weakens in the face of her father's glare. Eric inhales sharply, and Kirby cannot restrain himself. He says, "How can you disagree with that? It sounds self-evident to me."

"Does it? The child is three years old. How can she have control over her own body when she doesn't know anything about it? Does she go out without a coat if it's twenty below zero? Does she eat only cookies for three days? Does she wear a diaper until she's five? This is one of those phrases they are using these days. They all mean the same thing."

"What do they mean?" As Kirby speaks, Leanne and Mary Beth look up, no doubt wishing that he had a wife or a girlfriend here to restrain him. Harold looks up too. He is grinning.

Eric shifts in his chair, uncomfortable, Kirby suddenly realizes, at being predictably stuffy once again. Eric says, "It's Christmas. Let's enjoy it."

Harold says, "Principles are principles, any day of the year."

Eric takes the bait and lets himself say, "The family is constituted for a purpose, which is the sometimes difficult socialization of children. For a certain period of their lives others control them. In early childhood others control their bodies. They are taught to control themselves. Even Freud says that the young barbarian has to be taught to relinquish his feces, sometimes by force."

"Good Lord, Eric," Leanne says.

Eric is red in the face. "Authority is a principle I believe in." He looks around the table and then at Anna, openly

angry that she has gotten him into this. Across Anna's face flits a look that Kirby has seen before, has seen on Mieko's face, a combination of self-doubt and resentment molded into composure.

"Patriarchy is what you mean," Kirby says, realizing from the tone of his own voice that rage has replaced sympathy and, moreover, is about to get the better of him.

"Why not? It works."

"For some people, at a great cost. Why should daughters be sacrificed to the whims of the father?" He should stop now. He doesn't. "Just because he put his dick somewhere once or twice." The result of too many bourbons too early in the day.

"In my opinion—" Eric seems not to notice the vulgarity, but Harold, beside Kirby, snorts with pleasure.

"I don't want to talk about this," Leanne says. Kirby blushes and falls silent, knowing that he has offended her. It is one of those long holiday meals, and by the time they get up from the table, Kirby feels as if he has been sitting in a dim, candlelit corner most of his life.

There is another ritual—the Christmas Eve unwrapping of presents—and by that time Kirby realizes that he is actively intoxicated and had better watch his tone of voice and his movements. Anna hands out the gifts with a kind of rude bashfulness, and Kirby is surprised at the richness of the array: from Harold he has gotten a cotton turtleneck and a wool sweater, in bright, stylish colors; from Leanne a pair of very fancy gloves; from Isaac three pairs of rag wool socks; from Eric's family, as a group, a blue terry-cloth robe and sheepskin slippers. When they open his gifts, he is curious to see what the wrappings reveal: he has bought it all so long before. Almost everything is some gadget available in Japan but not yet in the States. Everyone peers and oohs and aahs. It gives Kirby a headache and a sense of his eyeballs expanding and contracting. Tomorrow night he will be on his way home again, and though he cannot bear to stay here after all, he cannot bear to go, either.

He drifts toward the stairs, intending to go to bed, but Harold looms before him, grinning and commanding. "Your brain needs some oxygen, brother," he says. Then they are putting on their parkas, and then they are outside, in a cold so sharp that Kirby's nose, the only exposed part of him, stings. Harold strides down the driveway, slightly ahead of him, and Kirby expects him to speak, either for or against Eric, but he doesn't. He only walks. The deep snow is so solidly frozen that it squeaks beneath their boots. The only thing Harold says the whole time they are walking is, "Twenty-two below, not counting the wind chill. Feels good, doesn't it?"

"Feels dangerous," Kirby says.

"It is," Harold says.

The neighborhood is brightly decorated, and the colored lights have their effect on Kirby. For the first time in three Christmases he feels a touch of the mystery that he thinks of as the Christmas spirit. Or maybe it is love for Harold.

Back at the house, everyone has gone to bed except Leanne and Mary Beth, who are drying dishes and putting them away. They are also, Kirby realizes—after Harold strides through the kitchen and up the stairs—arguing, although with smiles and in polite tones. Kirby goes to a cabinet and lingers over getting himself a glass for milk. Mary Beth says, "Kristin will make the connection. She's old enough."

"I can't believe that."

"She saw all the presents being handed out and unwrapped. And Anna will certainly make the connection."

"Anna surely doesn't believe in Santa Claus anymore."

"Unofficially, probably not."

"It's Isaac's first Christmas," Leanne says. "He'll like all the wrappings."

"I wish you'd thought of that before you wrapped the family presents and his Santa presents in the same paper."

"That's a point too. They're his presents. I don't think Kristin will notice them."

"If they're the only wrapped presents, she will. She notices everything."

Now Leanne turns and gazes at Mary Beth, her hands on her hips. A long silence follows. Leanne flicks a glance at Kirby, who pretends not to notice. Finally she says, "All right, Mary Beth. I'll unwrap them."

"Thank you," Mary Beth says. "I'll finish this, if you want." Kirby goes out of the kitchen and up to his bedroom. The light is already off, and Harold the younger is on his back, snoring.

WHEN HE GETS UP AN HOUR LATER, TOO DRUNK TO sleep, Kirby sees Leanne arranging the last of Santa's gifts under the tree. She turns the flash of her glance upon him as he passes through the living room to the kitchen. "Mmm," he says, uncomfortable, "can't sleep."

"Want some cocoa? I always make some before I go to bed."

He stops. "Yeah. Why not? Am I mistaken, or have you been up since about six A.M.?"

"About that. But I'm always wired at midnight, no matter what."

He follows her into the kitchen, remembering now that they have never conversed, and wishing that he had stayed in bed. He has drunk himself stupid. Whatever words he has in him have to be summoned from very far down. He sits at the table. After a minute he puts his chin in his hand. After a long, blank, rather pleasant time, the cocoa is before him, marshmallow and all. He looks at it. When Leanne speaks, Kirby is startled, as if he had forgotten that she was there.

"Tired?" she says.

"Too much to drink."

"I noticed."

"I don't have anything more to say about it."

"I'm not asking."

He takes a sip of his cocoa. He says, "Do you all see much of Eric and family?"

"They came last Christmas. He came by himself in the summer. To a conference on the future of the family."

"And so you have to put up with him, right?"

"Harold has a three-day limit. I don't care."

"I noticed you unwrapped all Isaac's presents."

She shrugs, picks at the sole of her boot. She yawns without covering her mouth, and then says, "Oh, I'm sorry." She smiles warmly, looking right at him. "I am crazy about Kristin. Crazy enough to not chance messing up Christmas for her."

"Today she told me that jumping off a cushion was a cautious thing to do."

Leanne smiles. "Yesterday she said that it was wonderful of me to give her napkin. You know, I don't agree with Eric about that body stuff. I think they naturally do what is healthy for them. Somebody did an experiment with one-year-olds, gave them a range of foods to choose from, and they always chose a balanced diet. They also wanted to be toilet trained sooner or later. I think it's weird the way Eric thinks that every little thing is learned rather than realized."

"That's a nice phrase." He turns his hip handle so that it points away and then back in his direction. Finally he says, "Can I tell you about something?"

"Sure."

"Yesterday a friend of mine called me from Japan, a woman, to say that she couldn't come visit me. Her father has cancer. She had planned to arrive here the day after tomorrow, and we were going to take a trip out west. It isn't important, exactly. I don't know."

Leanne is silent but attentive, picking at the sole of her boot. Now that he has mentioned it, the memory of Mieko's anguish returns to him like a glaring light or a underling noise, so enormous that he is nearly robbed of the power to speak. He pushes it out. "She can't come now, ever. She probably won't ever call or write me again. And really, this has saved her. She had all sorts of expectations that I couldn't have . . . well, wouldn't have fulfilled, and if she had come she would have been permanently compromised."

"Did you have some kind of affair when you were here?"

"For a few months. She's very pretty. I think she's the prettiest woman I've ever seen. She teaches mathematics at the school where I was teaching. After I had been with Mieko for a few weeks, I realized that no one, maybe in my whole adult life, had asked her how she was, or had put his arm around her shoulders, or had taken care of her

in any way. The slightest affection was like a drug she couldn't get enough of."

"What did you feel?"

"I liked her. I really did. I was happy to see her when she came by. But she longed for me more than I have ever longed for anything."

"You were glad to leave."

"I was glad to leave."

"So what's the problem?"

"When she called yesterday, she broke down completely. I listened. I thought it was the least I could do, but now I think that she is compromised. Japanese people are very private. It scares me how much I must have embarrassed her. I look back on the spring and the summer and yesterday's call, and I see that, one by one, I broke down every

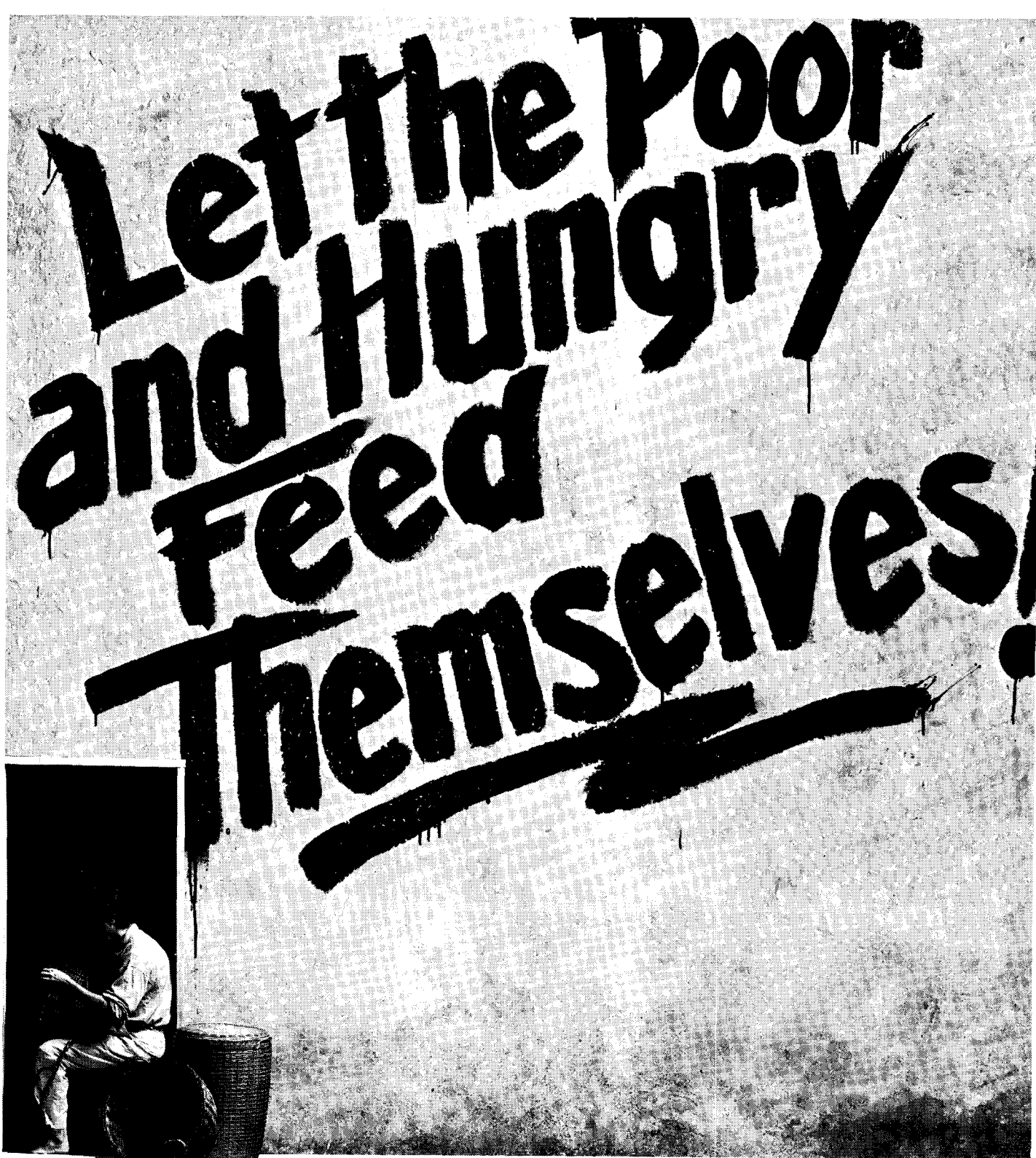
single one of her strengths, everything she had equipped herself with to live in a Japanese way. I was so careful for a year and a half. I didn't date Japanese women, and I was very distant—but then I was so lonely, and she was so pretty, and I thought, well, she's twenty-seven, and she lives in this sophisticated city, Osaka. But mostly I was lonely."

Leanne gazes across the table in that way of hers, calm and considering. Finally she says, "Eric comes in for a lot of criticism around here. His style's all wrong, for one thing. And he drives Harold the younger and Anna crazy. But I've noticed something about him. He never tries to get something for nothing. I admire that."

Now Kirby looks around the room, at the plants on the windowsill, the hoarfrost on the windowpanes, the fluorescent light harsh on the stainless-steel sink, and it seems to him that all at once, now that he realizes it, his life and Mieko's have taken their final form. She is nearly too old to marry, and by the end of her father's cancer and his life she will be much too old. And himself. Himself. Leanne's cool remark has revealed his permanent smallness. He looks at his hands, first his knuckles, then his palms. He says, "It seems so dramatic to say that I will never get over this."

"Does it? To me it seems like saying that what people do is important." And though he looks at her intently, seeking some sort of pardon, she says nothing more, only picks at her boot for a moment or two, and then gets up and puts their cups in the sink. He follows her out of the kitchen, through the living room. She turns out all the lights, so that the house is utterly dark. At the bottom of the stairs, unable to see anything, he stumbles against her and excuses himself. There, soft and fleeting, he feels a disembodied kiss on his cheek, and her voice, nearly a whisper, says, "Merry Christmas, Kirby. I'm glad you're here." □





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MUSIC

THE SYMPHONIC FURTWÄNGLER

BY WILLIAM H. YOUNGREN

THE GERMAN CONDUCTOR Wilhelm Furtwängler, whose centenary we celebrated this past year, is now generally acknowledged to have been one of the very greatest of Wagner conductors. During his lifetime Furtwängler, who died in 1954, was just as famous for his performances of the standard symphonic repertoire as for his Wagner. But today this side of his reputation is dubious—especially in this country. He never conducted here after 1927, and so there are now few American listeners who have as vivid a memory of his symphonic conducting as they have of Toscanini's or Bruno Walter's or Koussevitzky's. Moreover, there are many superb recordings, in modern stereo and even digital sound, of the symphonic repertoire. Thus, while Furtwängler's Wagner recordings have attracted a good deal of attention here in the past few years, his symphonic recordings are known mainly to musicians and to collectors who specialize in his work. But now, suddenly, there are several new compact discs that could help to right this situation.

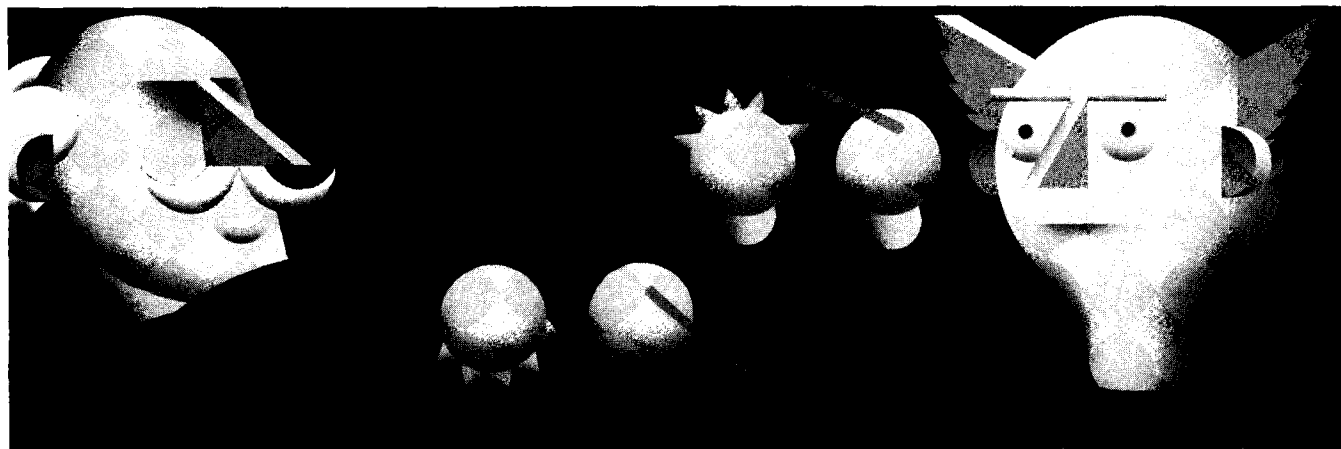
Five Deutsche Grammophon discs offer a representative sampling of Furtwängler's symphonic work: the Schubert Great C Major Symphony, together with the *Rosamunde* Overture (15 660-2); Haydn's Symphony No. 88 and Schumann's Fourth (415 661-2); Brahms's First, together with his Haydn Variations (415 662-2); Bruckner's Fourth (415 664-2); and Beethoven's

Seventh and Eighth (415 666-2). Five more discs from EMI are devoted almost entirely to Beethoven symphonies: the Ninth (CDC 7 47081 2); the Fifth, together with the Schubert Unfinished (CDC 7 47120 2); the *Pastorale* (CDC 7 47121 2); the First and Fourth (CDC 7 47409 2); and the *Eroica* (CDC 7 47410 2). Finally, there are two other discs, on the Bruno Walter Society label, which may be ordered from Music and Arts Programs of America, Inc., P.O. Box 771, Berkeley, California 94701: Beethoven's *Eroica*, together with his *Grosse Fuge*, Op. 133 (CD-520); and Bruckner's Fifth (CD-538). The performances on Deutsche Grammophon and EMI are all from the early 1950s, the former with the Berlin Philharmonic and the latter with the Vienna Philharmonic—except for the Beethoven Ninth, which was recorded live at the re-opening of the Bayreuth Festival after the war, in 1951, with the Festival Orchestra. The Bruno Walter Society *Eroica* was recorded at a concert given a few weeks after the studio recording on EMI was made (and is superior to that recording), and the Bruckner Fifth dates from 1942; both are with the Berlin Philharmonic.

Many critics, even some who have appreciated Furtwängler's ability to give continuous dramatic life to Wagner's huge forms, have branded him a self-indulgent or "improvisatory" symphonic conductor, a "tasteless effect-monger"

(in the words of the critic B. H. Haggin) who would speed up or slow down the tempo at moments of special excitement or beauty in a way that disrupted continuity and destroyed the formal balance of the comparatively short and tightly organized movements of classical and Romantic symphonies. Listening to these newly re-issued performances, one certainly does notice modifications of tempo that are both more frequent and more generous than we are accustomed to hearing today. But these are almost always justified by the musical content. Moreover, Furtwängler's ability to sustain continuous rhythmic life throughout the modifications, to make all the lines of the music stunningly clear at all times, and to obtain consistently beautiful and sensitively inflected playing makes most of his interpretations not only illuminating (and very moving) but also perfectly convincing—once one gets into their spirit.

Often, as in the first movements of the Beethoven Fifth and the Haydn No. 88, Furtwängler maintains his basic tempo with only slight modifications. But sometimes he creates a revealing interplay between tempo modifications and formal boundaries. In the first movement of the Schubert C Major, for example, his initial tempo for the exposition is quite fast, with a slight ritard for the second subject and then a gradual return to the initial tempo. But the development, which begins with a reminiscence of the second subject, is again somewhat slower, and the slower tempo is maintained for the beginning of the recapitulation (which one would expect to be at the same tempo as the beginning of the exposition). The initial tempo returns only as we approach the climax just preceding the restatement of the second subject. This way of performing the movement dramatizes a progression of



thought and feeling that comments on, even as it projects, the movement's formal organization. Similarly, in the first movement of the Brahms First, Furtwängler slows the tempo whenever he comes to the rising three-note chromatic phrase that echoes the movement's slow introduction, simultaneously drawing attention to the phrase's origins and to its new context. The effect is to bind the main body of the movement more closely to the introduction than is usually done. Sometimes, as in the minuet of the Beethoven Eighth, his tempos do simply seem too slow for the music, but such a case is exceptional. Furtwängler's genial and somewhat reflective style is perfectly suited to a work like the Schumann Fourth, with its many built-in changes of tempo, and his performances of Bruckner are unique because of the sensitivity and textural variety that make continuous, affecting sense of works that usually seem boring and repetitious in the hands of other conductors.

THE CONDUCTOR WITH whom Furtwängler is most often compared is, of course, Toscanini—his only real peer (and, I would say, his only superior) among his contemporaries. The polemical war between the supporters of the two men began in the 1920s, when they both conducted the New York Philharmonic, was fueled by the political events of the 1930s and the war years, and still rages. While Toscanini was exceptionally clear-eyed politically, getting out of all the wrong places at exactly the right times with sensible and eloquently phrased public statements, Furtwängler lingered on in Germany until a rumor that he was connected with the 1944 attempt to assassinate Hitler forced him to flee, in January of 1945, first to Vienna and thence to Switzerland. Though he was never a member of the Nazi Party and was cleared by denazification proceedings, his detractors still see him as a toady to the Nazis. His defenders not only point out that he intervened in behalf of many Jewish musicians but also see him as a noble spirit, at first above politics and then, once he had realized the horror of the Nazi regime, selflessly determined to stay and keep alive the tradition of Goethe and Beethoven in the land of Hitler and Goebbels. It seems fair to say that the issue will never be settled one way or the other.

But the political quarrel about the two men has been translated into musical

terms. Toscanini's defenders connect the indisputable correctness of his political attitudes and actions with his often expressed determination simply to play what was in the composer's score, without searching for extramusical meanings or imposing his own personality upon the music. To them, Furtwängler's generally slower tempos and frequent modifications of tempo seem manifestations of the same tendency to sentimentality and fuzzy thinking (or worse) that made him a tool of the Nazis. Furtwängler's defenders, on the other hand, speak scornfully of Toscanini's "speedy precision" and see him as a dull, literal-minded product of an age dominated by science and technology, an age in which a man of Furtwängler's high-mindedness and spirituality stands as a lonely beacon.

Now, of course this is all nonsense, born of insensitivity to the ample recorded evidence of both men's actual music-making and of the desire to make oneself sound serious and important by turning what is really a musical issue into a moral one. Certainly, listening to the performances here under review, even when one disagrees with Furtwängler's choices one wonders how anyone could accuse him of tastelessness or effect-mongering.

Correspondingly, one wonders how many of those who claim to hear in Toscanini's work only cold "objectivity" (as against Furtwängler's richly human "subjectivity") know the 1933 performance of Beethoven's Fifth now available from Music and Arts Programs of America (ATRA-3010). In the episode in the first movement's development section during which the orchestral choirs exchange mysterious sustained chords (bars 196–239), Toscanini gradually slows the tempo almost to a standstill and then gradually brings it back up again. The effect is powerful and very moving—but there is no sign of a ritard in the score. Furtwängler does not dis-tend the tempo to such an extent at this place in any of his seven currently available performances of Beethoven's Fifth, which span the years 1926 to 1954. To find a precedent for Toscanini's spectacular ritard one must go back to the 1913 Beethoven Fifth (the first commercial recording of a complete symphony) by Furtwängler's predecessor at the Berlin Philharmonic, Arthur Nikisch, which is available on EMI set 1C 137-54 095/99.

It is generally—but by no means always—true that as Toscanini advanced into his late seventies and his eighties,

his tempos did become faster and his modifications of tempo more subtle. But the 1933 Beethoven Fifth was not recorded when he was a young conductor groping for his style. He was, rather, at the height of his fame and sixty-six years old—about the age of Furtwängler when he made most of the recordings reviewed here. Toscanini's supposedly fast and rigid tempos have often been traced to the fact that much of his early training took place in the opera house rather than in the concert hall, and sometimes even to an alleged superficiality of Italian musicians, especially evident when they attempt the Austro-German symphonic repertoire. But this is absurd. Toscanini's career as a symphonic conductor began in 1896, and he was anything but a superficial man. It is equally absurd to trace Furtwängler's liking for generally slower tempos and greater modifications of tempo to some revered (or despised) Germanic tradition of conducting characterized by philosophical profundity (or by stodginess and dullness). Furtwängler's unique blend of clarity and grandiosity, of relaxed geniality and inner tension, puts him in a class by himself. He should not be lumped, as he often is, with Hans Knappertsbusch (with his muddy textures and square-cut time-beating) or with Otto Klemperer (who really was stodgy most of the time) or even with Bruno Walter (who was occasionally soft at the core, tending—as Toscanini once remarked—to "melt" whenever he came "to something beautiful").

Certainly, Toscanini saw no great categorical difference between Furtwängler and himself. When he resigned from his New York Philharmonic post, in 1936, it was Furtwängler he recommended to be his successor. The differences, which surfaced a year later in a famous quarrel at Salzburg, were purely political. Harvey Sachs, in his excellent biography of Toscanini, writes "In no source have I read or heard of an uncomplimentary statement by Toscanini regarding Furtwängler, either personally or musically, until the question of the latter's involvement with the Nazis arose in 1936." And Sachs notes that as late as 1950 Toscanini found Furtwängler's broadcast performance of Berlioz's *Damnation of Faust* "excellent." It has often been asserted, most notably by Daniel Gillis in his book *Furtwängler and America*, that Toscanini was behind the successful campaign to keep Furtwängler from conducting here after

he war. But Sachs doubts this, sensibly pointing out that the allegation is undocumented and that Toscanini "did not attempt to keep Furtwängler from returning to La Scala, which was still 'his' territory."

Therefore it is best, when listening to Furtwängler, to forget all about the paper war between his supporters and Toscanini's. Inevitably, those who know Toscanini's performances will remember them and compare them with Furtwängler's, but the result of the comparison should be further illumination of the works in question, not a compulsion to take sides. Great music can stand being played in many different ways, especially when it is played as splendidly as it was by both Toscanini and Furtwängler.

FOR THOSE WHO want to go beyond the performances available on the compact discs mentioned earlier, in order to gain a broader view of Furtwängler's work as a symphonic conductor, there are a large number of very interesting LP sets and single records also now available. Seraphim IF-6146 contains all the Beethoven symphonies and several overtures. Since the performances of the First, the *Eroica*, the Fourth, the *Pastorale*, and the Ninth are the same as those on the EMI compact discs, this set is of interest mainly to those who do not have a compact-disc player. Anyway, the real highlight of the set—Furtwängler's one surviving performance of the Beethoven Second, recorded at a 1948 concert in London's Albert Hall—is also available on a single record, Italian EMI 3C 153-03635. The sound is poor but the performance is thrilling—one of Furtwängler's finest.

Three other sets, also on Italian EMI, are devoted to performances of Beethoven and Brahms. The first of the two Beethoven sets, 3C 153-53800/05, contains Furtwängler's 78-rpm recordings of the *Eroica* (1947), the Fourth (1950), and the Fifth (1937), all of which are superior to the later performances on the EMI compact discs and in the Seraphim set. It also contains an assortment of overtures and three concerto performances: the *Emperor* with Edwin Fischer (1951) and two versions of the Violin Concerto with Yehudi Menuhin (1947 and 1953).

The other Beethoven set, 3C 153-3810/16, contains a number of live concert performances, most of them from

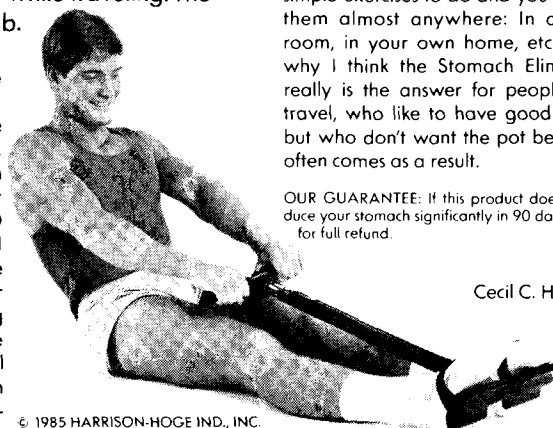
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1942-1944, which were formerly on the British Unicorn label: the *Eroica*, Fourth, Fifth, Seventh, and Ninth Symphonies; a couple of overtures; and the Fourth Piano Concerto, with Conrad Hansen as the soloist. The *Eroica* is perhaps Furtwängler's finest available version, and the Fifth vies for that title with the 1937 performance on the other Italian EMI set; the Ninth, while not Furtwängler's finest performance, is more cohesive than the one on the EMI compact disc and in the Seraphim set.

The Brahms set, 3C 153-53661/69, is taken mostly from live concert performances but also contains a couple of 78-rpm recordings. The symphonies are all represented, with two versions each of the Second and Fourth. Also included are the Haydn Variations and three of the Hungarian Dances, as well as three concerto performances: the Piano Concerto No. 2 with Fischer, the Violin Concerto with Menuhin, and the Double Concerto with the violinist Willi Boskovsky and the cellist Emanuel Brandebach, principals of the Vienna Philharmonic.

As for Bruckner, the third of the triumvirate of symphonists whom Furtwängler performed most frequently, Deutsche Grammophon set 2740 201 contains fine performances of the Fourth, Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Symphonies—the first of these being the one also on the Deutsche Grammophon compact disc. Another Deutsche Grammophon set, 2740 260, contains the Haydn No. 88, Schumann Fourth, and Schubert C Major that are also available on compact discs, as well as the Bruckner Seventh just mentioned, but it is worth getting for two performances not available on compact disc: a tempestuous 1947 Beethoven Fifth, recorded at one of Furtwängler's first reappearances in Berlin after the war, and one of Furtwängler's two commercial recordings of a Mozart symphony, No. 39 in E-flat (K. 543).

Furtwängler's other commercially recorded Mozart symphony, No. 40 in G minor (K 550), is inexplicably not available just now on any EMI label, domestic or foreign—and the loss is a double one, since it has usually been coupled with his only commercial recording of a Haydn symphony other than No. 88, No. 94 (*Surprise*). But a fine concert performance of the G minor is available from Music and Arts Programs of America (RR-395). The same distributor can

also furnish a set of the four Brahms symphonies that duplicates versions of the Second and Fourth found in the Italian EMI set but has very interesting late performances of the First and Third (RR-418). RR-314 contains a different version of the Bruckner Fifth from that on the Bruno Walter Society compact disc; and another version of the Beethoven Ninth, with the inferior Stockholm Philharmonic, is on RR-205. The 192 Beethoven Fifth that I mentioned earlier is on the Wilhelm Furtwängler Society UK label (Furt 100), available from German News, Inc., 220 East 86th Street, New York, New York 10028. As for symphonies outside the Austro-German repertoire, Furtwängler's famous 1938 Tchaikovsky *Pathétique* is on EMI set 1C 137-54 095/99, and his interesting but flawed 1953 Franck Symphony in D minor is on London Treasury Series R 23207. Finally, Fonit-Cetra Furtwängler Edition contains alternate versions, too numerous to list here, of many of the works mentioned earlier (and, in addition, the *Damnation of Faust* that delighted Toscanini). The Fonit-Cetra records, and also those on Italian EMI, may be ordered from IBR Classics, 40-11 24th Street, Long Island City, New York 11101.

NO MAN IS RESPONSIBLE for his admirers, and it is not Toscanini's fault that his admirers have spread the gospel of the one "correct" or "definitive" performance. No performance of musical masterpiece is "correct" in the sense that one answer to an arithmetic problem is correct. And while we sometimes refer to an outstanding convincing and authoritative performance as definitive, we should not take that to imply that any one performer can exhaustively define the nature of work. There is plenty of room—though not unlimited room—for interpretative differences, and it is the difference among great performances, as much as any single great performance, that a musical understanding. So we should stop pitting Toscanini and Furtwängler against each other in the simple-minded terms so often found in commentary on the two men's work. They were both very great musicians who still have much to teach us. It is not Toscanini who was rigid or Furtwängler who was self-indulgent: it is, rather, those critics who would have us exclusively prefer the work of one to that of the other who are both rigid and self-indulgent. □

FOOD

FAST PUFF PASTRY

BY CORBY KUMMER

THERE IS NO excuse for puff pastry. It's nothing but butter and flour, and it's bad for you. As someone with an aversion to butter, I have trouble justifying my love of puff pastry, but I've learned to embrace the contradiction. Putting into a piece of puff pastry is like putting into air—wonderfully crisp, flaky and light. Almost any dish is complemented by the crackle of puff pastry. Apart from being so good to eat, it is an excellent way to show off. People remember that you made puff pastry long after they have forgotten other dishes that were much more trouble.

Puff pastry is most familiar in napoleons or as patty shells, invented to hold thick cream sauces and thus consisting of a double layer of pastry. Patty shells come out. The fashionable presentation these days for first courses or desserts is the feuilleté—a flat rectangle of dough that rises when baked to about an inch and a half. You split it open and fill it with, say, vegetables in a light cream sauce for a first course, or poached or baked fruit slices for a dessert.

Feuilletés don't have fancy, scalloped edges, as patty shells do. Their straight, simple lines suit many post-modern chefs. For example, Anne Rosenzweig, a chef and co-owner of Arcadia, a popular restaurant in New York, puts a whole braised leek in a feuilleté, with a green tail curved around the outer edge. Jeremiah Tower, a San Francisco restaurateur, makes a pecan pie by filling a feuilleté with a cooked mixture of pound, toasted pecans and a sugar syrup, and serves it with a chocolate sauce and a sabayon lightened with whipped cream (the recipe is in his *New American Classics*). I find puff pastry most useful impressing guests at a cocktail party, in which purpose small feuilletés with elementary fillings work very well.

Classic puff pastry (*feuilletage classique*), in which a block of butter is encased in dough that is folded and rolled until it has 730 layers, is a lot of work. Ten books that begin by saying that it is easier than is popularly supposed, which is true, continue with pages and

pages of instructions. Fortunately, there is a much quicker and easier way to make puff pastry—you just cut up butter, mix it with flour and water, and start rolling. This method became popular here in the late seventies, when two books, *Julia Child & Company* and Jacques Pepin's *La Technique*, gave recipes for *feuilletage rapide*. It has been known at least since 1815, when the great pastry chef Antonin Carême mentioned it in his book *Le Pâtissier Royal*. Puff pastry made in this way became known as Scottish puff pastry, perhaps because the diced butter and flour resemble a plaid.

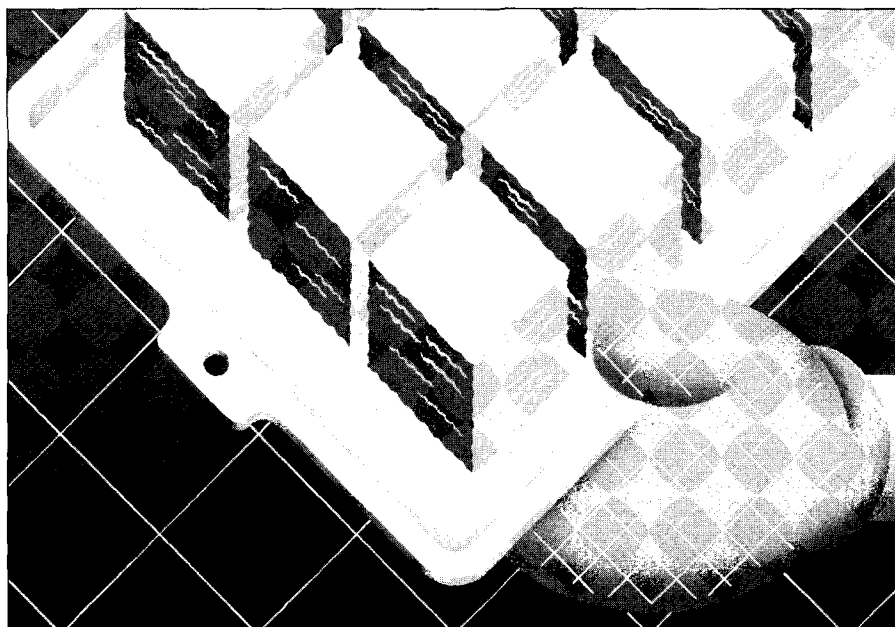
Pastry chefs still look on fast puff pastry as a last resort. But even though it doesn't boast the miracle of the 730 layers, it's flaky enough for me. I recently traveled to Boulder, Colorado, to take a course in pastry doughs with Bruce Healy, a disciple of a famous French pastry chef, Paul Bugat. The course would teach both kinds of puff pastry. I hoped to perfect my technique for making fast puff pastry, and to persuade Healy, who from our preliminary conversations seemed as condescending toward it as any *pâtissier*, that it was just as good as classic. I wanted to go on making the fast version with a clear conscience.

HEALY IS AN unlikely cooking teacher. He taught physics at Yale University for two years before a lifelong love of pastry led him to study in Paris with Bugat, whose grandfather was a pastry chef under Auguste Escoffier. Healy decided to write a book with Bugat explaining basic professional French pastry techniques for the American home cook; such a book, surprisingly, was not available. The book they wrote, *Mastering the Art of French Pastry*, which was published three years ago, documents techniques and recipes used in French *pâtisseries*.

Healy still has the manner of a science teacher. Studying in his kitchen reminded me of being in high school, where a blunder committed in the lab in the morning would be mentioned on the playing field in the afternoon. Healy is jocular. In one of his classes he tossed an egg behind his back to a student. It landed on the student's head.

The atmosphere is softened by Healy's teaching partner, Mary Taylor, who trained in Paris as a cuisine chef (meaning someone who cooks the savory, as opposed to the sweet, courses for a meal). Cuisine chefs usually find pastry chefs too concerned with precise quantities; pastry chefs usually find cuisine chefs too haphazard. Healy gives instructions that admit little dispute; Taylor tells students what they can get away with and still produce decent results.

Healy included fast puff pastry in the course with little enthusiasm. He has made classic puff pastry so many times that it seems usual and normal to him. He pointed out that fast requires almost



as much rolling as classic. He forgot that the rest times between rollings of the fast version are shorter and that you can use fast the same day you make it, whereas classic should rest overnight before it is baked. He said that fast was good for hors d'oeuvres and cookies but not for a showpiece like a *pithiviers*—two circular layers filled with almond cream. This was fine with me, since it had never occurred to me to serve a *pithiviers*.

FOR A BLOCK OF fast puff pastry (called a *paton*) which yields enough dough for desserts or hors d'oeuvres to serve two dozen people, start by putting about a cup of water in the refrigerator to chill (you'll need less) and melting a bit less than two tablespoons of unsalted butter. (Land O'Lakes is a brand on which many American pastry cooks rely, because of its consistent water content.) The precise amount to melt is 24 grams, or about five teaspoons. (Weighing ingredients makes sense in baking. Battery-operated scales, including models made by Terraillon and Soehnle, give precise measurements in grams and ounces. Cuisinarts has put on the market a handsome balance scale that will weigh as much as a pound in precise quarter-ounce increments; it costs about \$20 and is available at many kitchen-supply stores.)

The rest of the butter called for by this recipe is easily measured—half a pound, or two sticks—but the flour isn't. The amount is 12 ounces (340 grams), or about two and a half cups of unsifted flour. Many books call for mixing cake flour and regular flour in order to mimic French flour, which has a low gluten content. Healy uses all-purpose flour, and it works well.

Cut the sticks of butter in half lengthwise, in half lengthwise again, and then into half-inch dice, keeping the pieces separate. The colder the butter, the easier it will be to cut. Somewhere between frozen and chilled is ideal.

Sift the flour onto a counter. Healy had marble work spaces for each student—pastry stays coldest on marble. He also kept the air-conditioner on, even though outside it was only in the fifties (the students were told to bring heavy sweaters to wear in class). Although that much cold is not essential, it can be very difficult to roll puff pastry in a warm, humid room. Add half the butter chunks and toss to coat them with flour. Add the rest and do the same. Pro-

ceeding by halves makes it easier to keep the chunks separate, though this won't be a problem if the butter is well chilled.

Dissolve a teaspoon of salt in a half cup plus two tablespoons of the cold water. Pour the melted butter into the water. It will partially solidify and look like candle drippings. Healy calls this addition of melted butter, which other recipes for fast puff pastry don't specify, a pastry chef's trick. It quickly coats and neutralizes gluten strands, he says, helping to prevent an excessive amount of gluten from forming. Gluten is essential to make the layers in puff pastry, which will be driven apart by steam from the water in the dough. Too much gluten too soon, however, will make rolling difficult.

Start sprinkling the water over the flour-butter mixture with one hand and tossing with the other until you can pat the whole mess into a disheveled ball. Although you don't want to overwork the dough, you can be much clumsier than when making pie crust, and you can add two or three more tablespoons of water to the ball of dough to make it cohere. (Mary Taylor told the students that they could do this; Healy later admitted that he, too, usually needs to add a bit more water.) There will be many loose strands of dough and uncoated bits of flour, but don't let these worry you. The rolling will mix the dough.

Push the dough into a rough rectangle about one and a half inches high, ten inches or so long, and no more than five or six inches wide. Roll away from yourself to push the rectangle to a length of sixteen inches (the width won't increase by much). Healy showed each student how to put all his weight into rolling by standing directly over the rolling pin, not behind it, and grasping each end with the whole hand, not just resting the palm over it. It was impressive to watch Healy, who is six feet tall, struggle with a very firm piece of dough. Taylor, who had to use a step stool to be as far above the dough as Healy, worked even harder.

This first rolling is the most inconvenient, because the butter chunks stick to the counter and the pin. Keep dusting with flour—removing the excess with a brush—and keep scraping the dough off the counter. The dough will be rough and sticky, with naked chunks of butter showing through. When the rectangle is the right size (eighteen-inch rulers are invaluable in a kitchen), fold the top

third down and the bottom third up making a rough square. These two folds, akin to folding a business letter, are called a turn. The first turn in fast puff pastry serves to mix the dough. Once that's accomplished, wrap the square of dough in lightly floured wax paper and chill it in the freezer for fifteen minutes or in the refrigerator for half hour. Then unwrap the dough and place it on the rolling surface so that the folded edges become the long sides of the new rectangle, and the last third folds faces up.

Now you're ready for two more turns. Turns are usually done in pairs, so that gluten can form evenly—you roll in one direction, make a turn, and then roll in the perpendicular direction. Start with the dough at the very edge of the rolling surface, almost at your waist, so that you can put all your weight on top of it as you roll. Try to maintain the pressure throughout you began with through to the end. Always stop a half-inch short of the top and bottom edges of the dough: if you roll over the edge, the layers will be fused and the dough won't rise evenly. Keep flouring the rolling surface (lift the dough, from the sides, with a past scraper or a spatula), the rolling pin, and the dough. When the top and bottom edges of the dough become much thicker than the rest, gently roll over them side to side, trying not to increase their width by much. If the dough keeps sticking, flip it over, flour it and the surface, and try again. Brushing off excess flour matters more and more with each turn; the surplus will toughen the dough. Try to make the top edge square. Taylor showed the class how to do this by stretching it when starting a turn.

Once you've finished the first pair of turns, another pair remains. If you want to use the dough right away, you need only to chill it. If you want to store it and don't want to freeze the dough in its final shape, freeze it now and do the last turn after you defrost it. You have the option of doing the final pair of turns on sugar rather than flour, as *palmiers*—deliciously crunchy fan-shaped cookies—another cookies require. If at any point the rolling the dough shrinks back when you lift the pin, chill it again, even if your instinct is to persevere and get the turn over with. Dough that shrinks back will only become more difficult to roll and will shrink even more when baked. After the second pair of turns, chill the dough again before rolling it out to use

THE EASY PART of puff pastry comes at the end. You don't have to do much to it before you serve it. The range of shapes for puff pastry is fairly small, because the pastry itself is the limit. All you do is roll out the pastry into a rectangle or a square three eighths of an inch thick (you can roll in any direction once you've finished the turns, but you still have to stop rolling if the dough shrinks back), prick the dough all over with the tines of a fork so that it will rise evenly, and cut the shape you want.

If you have time, chill the rolled-out pastry before cutting it. A small biscuit cutter works well to make feuilletés in shapes suitable for hors d'oeuvres, but small squares or rectangles made with a knife or a pizza cutter are just as good. The usual shape for a dessert feuilleté is a rectangle two inches by four inches.

Be careful not to drag the knife and thereby smash the layers together, which will result in lopsided pastries (you can tell why a juice glass won't work as a substitute for a biscuit cutter). Place the tip of the knife at one end of the line you want to cut along and cut straight down until you come to the end of the side; then start again where you left off. This is easier if the dough is very cold. It also helps to measure with a ruler and score lines lightly with the back of a knife before cutting. If you use biscuit cutters, don't twist them on the upping. Transfer the pastries to a baking sheet moistened with a wet pastry brush or paper towel (the moisture will hold them in place). If you have the patience and the inclination, lightly score cross-hatch designs on the tops (don't go too deep, or the pastries won't rise properly). Brush beaten egg on the tops, and on the tops only—if it dribbles down the sides, it will fuse the layers. Chill or freeze the pastries for fifteen minutes or a half hour before baking. If you wrap the frozen dough tightly, it will keep for months. Don't defrost pastries before baking or they will lose some of the water that is needed to create steam.

To bake, preheat the oven to 450 degrees. When you put the chilled or frozen feuilletés in, turn the heat down to 375. Don't open the door for seven or eight minutes, so that steam has a chance to build up. Then start checking. The pastries are done when the edges as well as the tops are brown. This takes twelve to fifteen minutes for small pastries, and longer for larger ones. A

good method to ensure that the insides of larger pastries won't be gummy and greasy is to turn off the oven after ten minutes and let the pastries dry for ten or fifteen minutes more with the door open. They will rise to a height of one to one and a half inches; split them in half horizontally with a serrated knife and fill with whatever you choose. For hors d'oeuvres, anchovy paste, smoked salmon, or small pieces of pâté will do, as will any kind of flavored butter. For dessert, poached fruit or fresh berries are ideal, and a vanilla or lemon sauce on the side is even better.

FOLLOWING THESE instructions, start to finish, will produce the highest, tenderest pastry, and you should strive to adhere closely to them to teach yourself about puff pastry. But if the dough sticks, or looks blotchy rather than an even yellow, or refuses to form perfectly square edges, don't worry. This dough will work almost no matter how you mistreat it. When testing what must have been my twentieth batch I floured the counter and rolling pin with abandon, rolled side to side when it was forbidden, stretched the top edge to make it even, and was not scrupulous about halting at the first sign of the dough's shrinking back. The dough rose evenly and high all the same. When it came out of the oven I felt masterly instead of slovenly.

Healy almost came around to my point of view on the virtues of the fast method by the fourth day of the course. The main business of the lesson was to make a *pithiviers*, considered a hallmark of a pastry chef. Healy had insisted on making the classic puff pastry dough by himself the day before, rolling it with a chilled, twenty-inch-long section of a steel pipe that he had had cut at a plumbing-supply store. He took special care as he shaped the two large circles for the *pithiviers*, incising a perfectly even sunburst pattern on the top one. He put it into the oven and discouraged any peeking until it was ready. When the moment came, the class was impressed—almost as impressed as Healy, who immediately got out his camera. As he started shooting, Mary Taylor looked in the freezer for the batch of fast puff pastry that the class was to use that afternoon. "It isn't here," she said to Healy. "You just used *rapide*." Healy looked stunned. "All right, all right," he said to the class after a moment. "You still have to learn to make *classique*." □

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BOOKS



THE ETERNAL WORM

BY ANTHONY BURGESS

MEPHISTOPHELES:
The Devil in the Modern World
by Jeffrey Burton Russell.
Cornell University Press, \$24.95.

MUCH OF JEFFREY RUSSELL'S career has been devoted to the study of the fissiparous tendencies in Christianity—order and dissent in the medieval Church, the irreparable split known as the Reformation—but he has done his best work in that deepest region where God confronts the Devil, or absolute good wars with absolute evil. This new book completes a tetralogy that began with *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil From Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (1977) and pursued the history of the Father of Lies through *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition* (1981) and *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages* (1984). Satan, Lucifer, and the Devil are exactly synonymous, but with Mephistopheles we encounter a difference that is not purely onomastic. In Marlowe's play *Doctor Faustus* we meet Mephistophilis (sic), but we also briefly meet Lucifer. Goethe's *Faust* presents Mephistopheles as the only authentic Devil, able to argue with God in the manner of Satan in the Book of Job, but he has had rubbed onto him—not because of the influence of Marlowe's play (which Goethe knew and admired) but because of a common origin in the popular *Faustbuch*—a certain triviality, not to say vulgarity, which became in-

separable from the modern view of the Devil. Scotland's Auld Cloutie and England's Old Nick are comic and vaguely secular: indeed, Old Nick probably got his name from Niccolò Machiavelli, a highly secular philosopher of realpolitik. The Devil in Shaw's *Man and Superman* is probably meant to look like Mephistopheles in Gounod's *Faust*. In an age that has been spectacularly devoted to evil, evil's originator is a cloven-hoofed comic with long ears and a French beard. The Son of the Morning, the brightest of God's angels, has lost dignity and turned into a weedy gauleiter.

It is probably salutary for our age that we seem to believe in evil. The term became current in responsible journalism, I believe, when *Time* applied it, with theological exactitude, to the My Lai massacres. There are certain wrongs, public or private, that can hardly be explained by the social worker's appeal to frustration, stupidity, or deprivation. This, for instance—a report from UPI on November 14, 1984:

Cynthia Palmer, 29, and her live-in boyfriend, John Lane, 36, pleaded innocent to burning to death Mrs. Palmer's 4-year-old daughter in an oven. The two, who told neighbors shortly before their arrest that they were "cooking Lucifer," were arraigned Tuesday in Androscoggin County [Maine] Superior court. They were arrested Oct. 27 at their Auburn tenement apartment. Angela Palmer was found stuffed in the electric oven. The door was jammed shut with a chair.

That, Russell says, is moral evil, an action of "unfathomable cruelty." The Devil is its symbol, but is he more than

that? The question of his existence can not be resolved in the terms of natural science, which our superstitious age presumes can answer all ontological inquiries, but if the Catholic Church, despite the *aggiornamento* of Pope John XXIII, insists that he exists, it is invoking a mode of belief more sophisticated than that of the pragmatic inquirer. Accept that God exists—a definable entity endowed with free will—and it would seem to follow that he has an opposite number. Incarnate God as Jesus Christ and the Devil he fights against become even more palpable. There is something structurally unsatisfying about a personalized deity warring against a nebulous abstraction called evil.

Evil has always been a theological problem. If God is omnipotent, then God is responsible for earthquakes, cancer, and the roasting alive of four-year-old children. Optimistic theologians like Luther and Leibnitz could see evil as an aspect of divine good that we are too ignorant to perceive. Ordinary humanity unrefined by such logic, merely screamed out against divine injustice. Blame evil on the Devil and you somehow reduce God to one of two warring Machian entities: his omnipotence gravely impaired. The God of Goethe and the Book of Job finds that the Devil is useful: he tests man's faith, pricks him on to greater goodness, qualifies his complacency. The Nazi death camps seem to be a high price to pay for such an educative process. Set the Devil against God and you are forced to accept free will as the primal force in the universe. Lucifer fell, and God could not prevent his falling. His love of creation, angelic and human, imposed a diminution of



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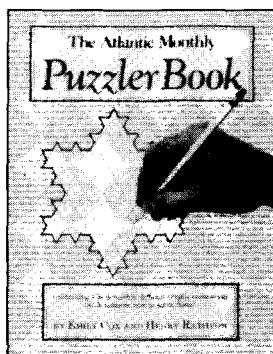
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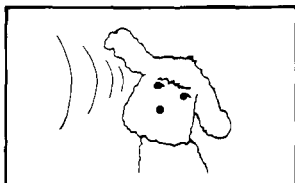


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omnipotence. God could stop evil if he wished, and reduce Lucifer to a slag heap, but to wipe out evil would be to wipe out free will. That is a grim but satisfactory answer.

Russell writes of the history of the Devil in the modern world, but it is not like writing the history of Metternich or Napoleon. All he can give us is the myth, the noumenon as phenomenon, the Devil as other writers have conceived him. If we expect a theological survey of, say, Nazism, with Lucifer present at the Wannsee Conference and placing his hoofprint on the infamous protocol that came out of that debate on the Final Solution, we will be disappointed. Nobody in our age, except the clearly demented, has seen the Devil. But quite a few people have read *Paradise Lost* and *Faust*, and even more have seen *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Exorcist*. In an infamous enactment like the Charles Manson massacre the Devil can be invoked as the cause of sin—"It wasn't me, sir; the Evil One made me do it"—but such an alibi fails to evoke the solid presence of the great tempter. Our Devil is a theatrical ham of considerable stupidity—sometimes, as in the film *Heaven Can Wait*, suavified into a hotel manager, but more often, as in the film *Les Visiteurs du Soir*, the fork-bearded, malevolent joker who is Goethe's creation and Gounod's oily vulgarization.

But the question Russell asks on our behalf seems answerable only in terms of a highly intelligent destructive force that knows what it is doing, though we do not.

At present, with arsenals of nuclear weapons estimated at seventy times the quantity needed to kill every living vertebrate on earth, we are stubbornly making preparations for a war that will profit no individual, nation, or ideology but will condemn thousands of millions to a horrible death. What force urges us down a path that is daily more dangerous? To whose advantage is the nuclear destruction of the planet? Only that force which from the beginning has with infinite cruelty and malice willed the destruction of the cosmos. If we are to avoid nuclear war, we must confront radical evil squarely.

So we must. And yet the theological optimists would say that we have been expecting a nuclear war since 1945 and, forty-odd years later, our expectations have gotten somewhat stale. The very horror of the prospect has diminished

the possibility of its realization. But we want to blame something or somebody for the nightmare of apocalyp and its fragmentary manifestations in two ghastly world wars, we can always look at ourselves. The theologians will tell us of original sin, which remains the most plausible of the explanations of the destructive urge in Adam's sons (it rarely in his daughters). And whence did original sin originate? In God's supreme gift of free will, which requires both good and evil for it to operate effectively. Such logic obviates the need for a diabolology. God is not wholly good, but he under no necessity to be. He too has free will. These answers, however, fail to satisfy that need for a personal Devil which balances our need for a personal God. Jeffrey Russell's thoughtful series of books is all about human need. □

"THE JAIL OF
INFINITE SPACE"

BY WILLIAM BOYD

THE FATAL SHORE
by Robert Hughes.
Knopf, \$24.95.

ON JANUARY 20, 1788, a fleet of ships from England with 700 convicts on board—men, women, and children anchored in Botany Bay. The modern history of Australia had begun. The thief colony was born.

The Fatal Shore is the story of the first eight decades of Australia's existence. Eighty years after the first convicts arrived (almost to the day, in fact: January 10, 1868), the last boat docked at Fremantle, Western Australia, disembarking sixty Fenian political prisoners, the final batch of what were effectively slave laborers, transported to turn the increasingly profitable wheels of commerce in this prosperous outpost of the British Empire. Robert Hughes, an Australian himself, has written a long, exhaustively researched, and fascinating account of the birth of a nation that was created solely to reduce the prison population of Georgian Britain. Because of the idiosyncratic nature of Australia's evolution the book is a history of prisons and incarceration, of crime and punishment, rather than of pioneers and exploration or all the normal hardy accoutrements of embryonic nationhood. These aspects

merged later, as emancipated convicts became settlers and a trickle of immigrants began. Other communities were established, farmers conquered the bush, cities were founded and began to expand. But the convicts kept coming, year after year—162,000 of them—making Australia the first country to be populated under duress.

While Hughes's main interest is in the darker side of the country's history, he does not neglect other issues. The desperate accounts of prisons and prisoners are enlivened and leavened by pithy histories of the fate of the Aborigines and the swift emergence of a complex class system, from *soi-disant* gentlemen farmers to the offspring of the convict settlers—the Currency. As one might expect with a British colony, every nuance of bourgeois pretension and snobbery is also transported. Hughes analyzes the creaking hierarchy with wit and insight. He also provides a superb portrait of Georgian England, its nervous middle class as obsessed with the threat of crime as any twentieth-century community. In late-eighteenth-century England one person in eight made his or her living from crime, and a thief could be sentenced to death for stealing a dozen cabbages from a market garden. The honest citizen lived in dread of the "rob," the foul, gin-sodden, swinish multitude that begged and stole and watched what living it could in the slums of the cities. The urge to commit crime was seen almost as an ethnic trait among these people. They were the whores and knoekers, the drunks and cutpurses, who swelled the population of the ancient prisons and prison hulks, and they were the first citizens of Australia.

Chapter after chapter of *The Fatal Shore* relates an inhuman history of chain gangs and prison settlements, of futile escape attempts and desperate cannibalism, of "female factories" (dormitories for transported women criminals) and convict barracks where "the most disgusting crimes that ever stained the character of man [were] perpetrated," to quote from a contemporary account. There is the odd ray of light when a decent prison governor attempts penal reform, but he is invariably replaced by a sadistic monster. Indeed, the brutality of some of these nineteenth-century camp commandants is surpassed only in the twentieth-century gulag or concentration camp.

What one remarks on repeatedly as one reads the drear histories of notorious

settlements like Port Arthur and Norfolk Island is the unrelenting use of the lash, or, more precisely, the cat-o'-nine-tails. Has any nation, one wonders, ever flogged its malefactors as enthusiastically as the British? It seems that discipline to the British mind is inseparable from severe corporal punishment. The cat was pre-eminent in Britain's army and navy for centuries (its last recorded use, I believe, was in 1914, when two sailors were flogged for attempted mutiny off the coast of East Africa). In school senior boys were still caning juniors in the 1950s, and today England is the only country in Europe where corporal punishment in school has not been banned. But even set against this background,



the history of Australian prisons, as related by Hughes, astonishes one with the gleeful ferocity with which the lash was wielded.

It was not uncommon, for example, to be flogged for "looking up from work." This might earn you the minor punishment of thirty-five lashes. I say minor because a three-hundred-lash sentence was not rare. Beneath a properly whipped cat-o'-nine-tails the skin would break by the third stroke and blood would be flowing by the sixth. By the end of your sentence your back would be a raw, tattered pulp, with bone and sinew exposed. A three-hundred-lash sentence would take place over several days, allowing time for the back to scab over. Or, alternatively, once the back

had been laid bare, flogging would continue on the buttocks, and if they gave out, on the calves.

Floggings were meticulously logged. In 1835, for example, 7,103 were administered to a male convict population of 27,340. To quote from an eyewitness:

I had to go past the triangles, where they had been flogging incessantly for hours. I saw a man walk across the yard with the blood that had run from his lacerated flesh squashing out of his shoes at every step he took. A dog was licking the blood off the triangles, and the ants were carrying away great pieces of human flesh that the lash had scattered about the ground.

Often the scourged flesh was not allowed to be treated, and prisoners would discover their backs alive with maggots. One convict recounted,

My shoulders were actually in a state of decomposition the stench of which I could not bear myself, how offensive then must I appear and smell to my companions in misery.

It is a vivid and ghastly chronicle, scrupulously related by Hughes, and his accounts of the prison settlements at Port Arthur and Norfolk Island and of bestial commandants like Major Joseph Foveaux, Lieutenant Colonel James Thomas Morisset, and, worst of all, John Price, make chilling additions to the catalogue of human infamy.

IT IS NOT ALL so desperate as this, but there is no doubt that the early years of Australia were accompanied by more than a fair share of human degradation. The bad as well as the good, it must be said, is immeasurably enhanced by Hughes's style. Throughout the more than six hundred pages of narrative and notes it rarely flags. It is intelligent, colorful, urbane, and trenchant. To take just one example, almost at random, Hughes writes about the first settlement of Norfolk Island, where it was hoped that pine and flax would be produced.

Norfolk Island pines, however, like the rest of antipodean nature, were deceptive. . . . Their wood was not resilient enough for spars. It was short-grained, wanting in resin, more like beech than Norway pine; it snapped like a carrot.

The flax, too, was disappointing. A flax dresser came from London and eventually managed "to produce for the Admiralty a couple of square yards of

Norfolk Island linen—perhaps among the costliest textiles ever woven by man.” Eventually two Maoris from New Zealand (the Maoris were reputed to be great flax workers) were kidnapped and brought to the island.

One was a young chief named Woodoo; the other, Tooke, was a priest’s son; both were twenty-four years old and neither had the slightest idea of how to prepare flax, for such menial work was done by women. So Tooke and Woodoo moped haughtily about the settlement, gazing out to sea from the headlands where “almost every evening at the close of day [they] lament their separation by crying or singing a song expressive of their grief, which is at times very affecting.”

The exact simile, the correct ironic aside, the nice sense of the absurdly humorous . . . It is rare to read a work of historical scholarship laden with such textual pleasures.

Beneath the copious research, the documentation, the scholarly apparatus, and the complexities of the narrative *The Fatal Shore* seeks to make a larger polemical point. Would Australians, Hughes asks, have done anything differently if the country had not been settled “as the jail of infinite space”? “Certainly they would. They would have remembered more of their own history.”

Hughes accuses his country of a collective act of forgetting. The penal past of Australia has been regarded as an enormous historical embarrassment. There has been a “longing for amnesia.” And so, in large degree, *The Fatal Shore* sets itself in direct opposition to that tendency. It has at the center a forthright need to debunk precious genteel evasions and convenient myths about the country’s brutal origins. There was no hidden agenda to the colonization of Australia. It was the largest forced exile of citizens that the world had seen. “In Australia,” Hughes claims, “England drew the sketch for our own century’s . . . terrible fresco of repression, the Gulag.”

Hughes sees this act of amnesia as causally connected to many of the less worthy aspects of modern Australia—notably a kind of political lethargy before authority and the strain of macho philistinism for which the country is famous. Much of what he says will be more meaningful to Australian than to American readers, but the general point is well made. Milan Kundera observed

that the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting. And in *The Fatal Shore* Australia has its past, its memory, fully restored in magnificent detail—in good time, incidentally, for its bicentennial celebration, in 1988. Hughes notes somewhat ruefully that there is no monument of any kind to the men and women of the First Fleet, and that none appears to be planned. Until one is constructed, *The Fatal Shore* will be ideal. □

ALL THE FOOD THAT’S FIT TO EAT

BY CHARLES MICHENER

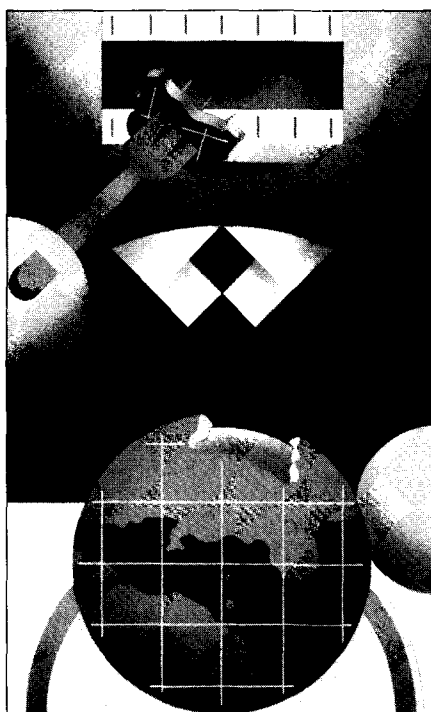
APPLE’S EUROPE:
An Uncommon Guide
by R. W. Apple, Jr. Atheneum, \$14.95.

AS A CORRESPONDENT for *The New York Times*, R. W. (“Johnny”) Apple, Jr., has covered Vietnam, Biafra, the Iranian revolution, the attempted assassination of the Pope, and four U.S. presidential elections, not to mention various European social, political, and economic issues and the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales. With that kind of schedule most journalists looking for a bit of R and R would head straight for a beach in the Caribbean or a cabin in Maine. Not Apple. When he

was ten, an uncle showed him some photographs from a trip across the Gobi Desert, whereupon he acquired “an incurable case of wanderlust.” He might better have written “an obsession with oases.” For the past twenty years or so Apple, it seems, has devoted every spare moment between great events to scouring Europe and its fringes for great art, great scenery, and above all, great food. Given its latter-day compulsion to print not just the news but advice on everything to see and eat under the sun, *The Times* was only too happy to subsidize these researches. Most of Apple’s findings first appeared in its various seeing and eating sections and now make up the bulk of a guide that is remarkably useful and enticing.

Apple grew up in Akron, Ohio, and that middle-American capital of placid cooking and tire manufacturing seems to have bred in him an unpuncturable enthusiasm for antique splendor and exotic flavors. (He cheerfully admits that around what is apparently a cast-iron stomach he has developed a spare tire of his own.) Sensibly he steers toward the offbeat, and one can only hope that his choices of unspoiled destinations—Britain’s East Anglia; the Finnish lakes; Mendocino, in Italy; the Greek Peloponnese and so forth—are not widely followed in Britain, where he lived for eight years as the *Times* bureau chief in London, getting the lion’s share of coverage. Apple is very good on ways to break down London’s sprawl of curiosities—he advises chasing down the buildings of Christopher Wren and following in Churchill’s “footsteps”—and he is eye-opening on the attractions of lesser-known places, notably the artistic astonishments of Glasgow. His Italian chapter suggests an excellent way of bringing Tuscan art into focus—a treasure hunt for the scattered Renaissance masterpieces of Piero della Francesca—and makes a persuasive case for a jaunt around the obscure monuments of Apulia, in the heel of the boot.

Elsewhere, it is more grand sights in Brussels, Victor Horta’s art-nouveau marvel, the Hôtel Solvay; in Spain, the shrine at Santiago de Compostela; in Scandinavia, the Modernist designs of Finland’s Alvar Aalto. Heading east, he ferrets out Romanian monasteries with rare medieval frescoes on their façades. Stepping beyond the boundaries of the book’s title, he drops in on Samarkand in central Russia, for Islamic dazzlements, on Morocco for Moorish



ghts, on Jordan for the great Hellenistic temples at Petra. Perhaps under the ressure of newspaper deadlines, his rose races as fast as his rented cars, tidding on superlatives ("one of the most breath-taking experiences of my avel lifetime") and occasionally running out of gas ("The fjords are what makes western Norway different"). But s energy and sense of enjoyment are fectionous, and he wisely leaves artistic sights below the superlative level to esthetes who had more time (Pevsner, ersonson, Lord Clark).

An Uncommon Guide's outstanding service is its advice on how to fill your omach after filling your eye. No bread d cheese by the roadside will do: as alously as he has pursued Piero, Apple iffes out the best smoked salmon in itain, the best steak in Scotland, the st grilled fish in Venice, the best Dan- pastry in Copenhagen, the best pi-on pie in Marrakech. (A peak of sorts reached in the vast food halls of a store

West Berlin, where he and his wife nsume a lunch of oysters and white ne followed by bratwurst and beer folwed by a "rich LeNôtre cake, folwed by coffee." Apple, who is not luble on the subject of prices, adds thout irony, "The meal cost \$25, but would have been much cheaper witht the oysters.") I have nearly given up ing French food in Paris, because of e dearth of honest, simple cooking, f so am particularly grateful for his of "best" bistros. And, yes, I con- on his "favorite new dish in some ic"—the roasted red peppers stuffed h codfish at El Amparo, in Madrid. ple's subtitle is not misplaced. As a nd of one man's taste and where-to- manship (he guarantees that he ok no one else's word" for any rec- mendations), his book helps fill a ge gap on the travel shelf, which dies too easily between self-boosting ounts of personal adventure on the e hand and anonymous compendia of mes and addresses on the other. is "uncommon guide" is uncommon- redible.

But it would be unwise to follow Ap- too religiously. Really memorable vel entails serendipity, allowing itself to get lost, to bump up against : unexpected. The risk with Apple guide is that in getting to the ht destinations—the best sights, : best rooms, the best tables—you l have missed the journey along the y. □

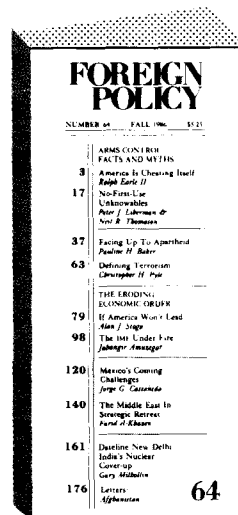
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BRIEF REVIEWS



ROBERT FROST HIMSELF by Stanley Burnshaw. Braziller, \$19.95. Mr. Burnshaw's long admiration of Frost was rewarded when, in 1958, he became the poet's editor and frequent companion. After Frost's death he was expected to become the editor in charge of Lawrance Thompson's official biography, but he soon found the job intolerable. Thompson, in his opinion, had come to hate Frost and had therefore resolutely put the worst possible interpretation on facts that were not always accurate to begin with. (Mr. Burnshaw's analysis of the borderline at which, in biography, the subject's fact of life becomes the biographer's subjective opinion is decidedly shrewd.) The Thompson biography, representing Frost as a mean wretch who drove his family to distraction, was received, on publication, with respect and widespread belief. It also aroused dismay among friends and admirers of Frost, and Mr. Burnshaw expected it to produce a knowledgeable correction of the biased portrait. When no such correction appeared, Mr. Burnshaw tackled the "monster myth" himself. His book is not a conventional biography of Frost—in fact, it begins with a good deal of autobiography, because Mr. Burnshaw believes, quoting Edward Hallett Carr, that "when we take up a work of history, our first concern should not be with the facts which it contains but with the historian who wrote it," and he intends to make his own stand, as biographer and critic, as clear as possible before getting down to the serious business of dismantling the late Thompson. He accomplishes that task with a mass of intelligently presented evidence, and finishes off the book with an illuminating discussion of Frost's poetry.

TRAVELS IN THE LAND OF THE GODS by Richard Gordon Smith, edited by Victoria Manthorpe. Prentice-Hall, \$25.00. Smith was an Edwardian gentleman with no occupation and enough money to enjoy that situation. In 1898 he rambled into Japan and remained there, off and on, until 1907. He kept elaborate diaries, which he illustrated with photographs and the work

of Japanese artists, some of whom he hired for the purpose, and it is this record that is available, in part, in this fascinating book. Along with the inevitable contrivances and confusions, Smith's text records his unpremeditated development from swaggering British visitor to interested observer, to deliberate student, to a mingling connoisseur, and even, finally and surprisingly, to participant in useful employment. He saw the last of the old Japan and the beginnings of the new, a period recorded both with a sharp eye and an uninhibited pen.

FALLING TOWARDS ENGLAND by Clive James. Norton, \$15.95. Mr. James grew up—more or less—in Australia and arrived in England at age twenty-three, well supplied with socialist ideals, literary ambitions, and water behind the ears. Clive does not need to be either English or Australian to find his account of his bumbustle puppy assault on London hilarious. He is a very funny man—when safely in retrospect and on paper.

THE MAN WHO MADE THE DEVIL GLAD by Donald McCaig. Crown, \$16.95. McCaig has scooped up the standard features of the standard hunter-hunted thriller, set them down in the mountains of West Virginia, and given them a fine finish with local language, hill-country detail, and just plain expert writing.

VAVRA'S CATS by Robert Vavra. Morrow, \$39.95. The beauty of cats needs no artificial enhancement, as Mr. Vavra, author and photographer, knows perfectly well, but that beauty can also survive a surprising amount of unlikely ornament, as feline fairyland proves. Large or small, tame or wild, the cats pose wreathed in flowers, swathed in laces, hung with jewels, and surrounded by elegant slaves who bring them cream. The photographs are accompanied by quotations from various ailurophilic sources, Mr. Vavra's text amply explains his adoration of his subject, and practical notes on the various types of cat conclude this loving and eccentric tribute to the species.

THE GREEK GENERALS TALK by Philip Parotti. University of Illinois, \$11.95. When the great commanders long gone from Troy long fallen, the generals of Mr. Parotti's novel are the men who, as you learn, learned strategy from Nestor or espionage under Odysseus. Now, as elderly authorities, they recall the past and consider how to apply its lessons to defend

ainst the invasion that they all fore-
e. The book contains enough pastiche
bit more than enough for some tastes)
keep it anchored to Homer, and
ough modern implications to keep it
adily interesting.

JEDGEPODGE by J. Bryan III. *Atheneum*,
2.95. Mr. Bryan has compiled "a com-
nplace book," meaning one in which
records any oddity, witticism, or idea
t catches his fancy. He has a nice taste
such items, and a neat touch with his
n peppery reflections, making his grab-
g book thoroughly amusing.

**ORDS AND IMAGES OF EDVARD
MUNCH** by Bente Torjusen. *Chelsea Green*,
7.00. Munch (1863-1944) was a persis-
t experimenter and innovator, particu-
y in print making. He was also a man
many unfinished or revised projects,
of which was a graphic series called
Mirror and intended to illustrate "the
l's progress" or, more accurately, the
st's own preoccupation with "life, love
i death." Ms. Torjusen has tracked
vn most, if perhaps not quite all, of the
its (some subjects come in a number of
erent versions) that were, or would
e been, part of *The Mirror*, along with
"poems in prose" that Munch often
ed to his works. He was a prolific writ-
scorned the wastebasket, and had
ams of what today would be called a
ltimedia art. The illustrations in Ms.
jusen's handsomely designed study
well reproduced, and her text is adm-
y informative. It is startling, therefore,
ind Munch's own text disfigured by
n lines as "he lay his head" and "it
st not be her," for he came from a liter-
family, and it is hard to believe that he
uld have committed grammatical vul-
ties in any of his several languages.

MAKING AMERICA by Barbaralee Dia-
stein. *Crown*, \$30.00. Ms. Diamon-
n, an enthusiast for the useful, as
osed to the merely nostalgic, conser-
on of old buildings, reports on the
aptive reuse" of architectural relics all
ss the country. Most of the structures
presents are clearly well worth the
ble of renovation, a few appear to
e survived because it would have cost
int to demolish them, and several are
ly amusing. A minute Kentucky jail
become a local museum, and a Jewish
ple flourishes as a smart apartment
plex. All the transmogrifications are
ly photographed and well described.

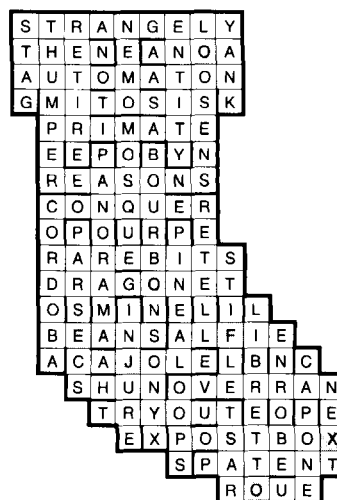
—Phoebe-Lou Adams

Answers to the December Puzzles

"STOCKING STUFFERS"

The extra letters spell *The Joy of Sox*.

Across. 1. ST(R-ANGEL)Y 8. TEN(nessee) 9. ANA
(alternate letters) 10. A(U-TOMATO)N 11. MI-
TOS-IS (sot I'm rev.) 12. P(RIM)ATE
16. REASONS (anag.) 17. CONQUER (homo-
phone) 21. R(A-RE)BITS (stir rev.) 23. DRAGNE-
T (anag. + t) 26. BANS(hccs) 27. A-LFIE (a +
anag.) 29. C(A-JOLE) 32. SHUN 33. O-VERRAN
35. TRO(UT) 37. POST-BOX (stop anag.)
38. PATE-N(o)T 39. RUE (double def.) Down.
1. SAG (rev.) 2. TH(UMP)E-R 3. RETIRE (double
def.) 4. NEMO (rev.) 5. ENTITY (anag.)
6. L(OOSE)NS (o + anag.) 7. YANK (double
def.) 13. MO(use)-SQUE(aking) 14. PAN(OR)AMA
15. B(OUR)-BONS (snob rev.) 17. CO-RDOBA
(board anag.) 18. RE-TELL 19. PARSECS (anag.)
20. PINE(A)-L 22. STILE (homophone)
24. INURE (anag.) 25. LI-B-RETTO (otter rev.)
28. ENROB-E (borne rev.) 30. O-N-YX 31. CA-
(PO)NE 33. O-O-P-S (rev.) 34. N(E)T 36. TAR
(rev.)



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stition. . . . provided a certain ritual was enacted. . . . she would swing it back and
forth in front of your nose, intoning, 'Abracadabra chicken gumbo, now you're safe
from mumbo jumbo.'"

—Peter DeVries, *The Prick of Noon*

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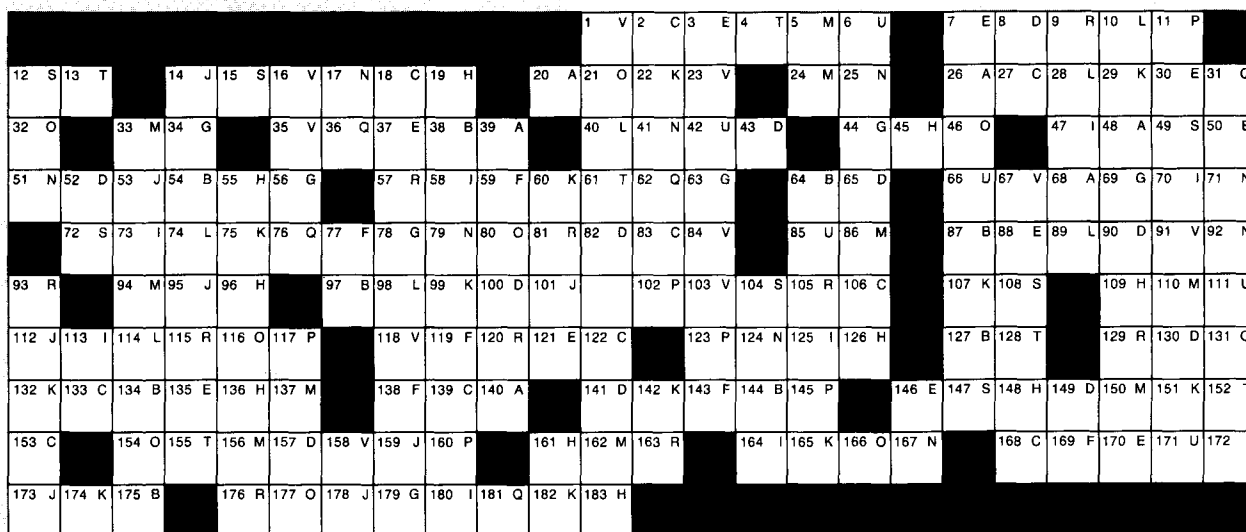
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ACROSTIC No. 18

BY DOROTHY OSBORNE

The letters of clue answers, when put in the appropriately numbered squares, will spell out a quotation. The first letters of clue answers spell the author and source of the quotation.



The solution to Acrostic No. 17 appears on page 91.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>A. Fashionable frozen fare
68 26 140 20 39 48</p> <p>B. Dance originating in 1920s Harlem
97 87 64 134 144 54 127 38 175</p> <p>C. Rural districts (2 wds.)
168 27 2 153 133 18 139 83 106 122</p> <p>D. Flapping contraption
141 100 130 82 52 157 65 149 43
90 8</p> <p>E. Billy Joel hit of 1983 (2 wds.)
50 146 121 135 7 88 37 30 3 170</p> <p>F. Vegetable sponge
77 169 59 138 119 143</p> <p>G. Produce volubly, as sarcasm (2 wds.)
63 78 56 179 34 69 44</p> <p>H. Nightmarish cult film by David Lynch
19 136 109 183 55 148 45 96 161 126</p> <p>I. Medium of Laforque or Kahn (2 wds.)
58 73 164 47 113 180 172 70 125</p> <p>J. Whom Orpheus loved and lost
14 53 95 101 159 112 178 173</p> <p>K. Be domineering (3 wds.)
99 165 60 132 75 29 182 174 22
107 151 142</p> | <p>L. Broadcast
89 28 114 40 10 98 74</p> <p>M. Country headed by Félix Houphouët-Boigny (2 wds.)
5 110 24 162 86 156 150 94 137 3</p> <p>N. Author of <i>Ecce Homo</i>
25 17 167 92 79 124 51 41 71</p> <p>O. Southwestern pokey
131 80 116 177 166 154 21 32 46</p> <p>P. Ship used by polar explorer James C. Ross
117 145 11 102 123 160</p> <p>Q. Workplace of TV's Alice Hyatt
31 76 181 62 36</p> <p>R. Scar on the earth made by a meteorite
129 93 81 120 9 115 105 163 176 3</p> <p>S. Plug-ugly
49 147 108 72 104 12 15</p> <p>T. Two-legged, winged dragon
4 128 61 152 155 13</p> <p>U. Zulu-derived term for a parley
66 6 171 111 85 42</p> <p>V. A near thing; touch and go (3 wds.)
67 158 118 35 84 1 16 103 91 3</p> |
|---|--|

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WORD WATCH

BY ANNE H. SOUKHANOV

agrimation *noun*, automated farming, especially the use of supersmart robots to perform heretofore manual operations that require acute vision, dexterity, and the ability to make choices: "Tireless and versatile, these mechanical migrants will do everything from harvesting artichokes to milking cows. The researchers have coined a new word for the move to automated farming: *agrimation*" (*Business Week*).

BACKGROUND: The quotation from *Business Week* is our first example of the word *agrimation* in a nontechnical publication. The word is of particular interest as a representative of a new high-tech lexical subculture—one specific to robotics. Two other members of this subculture are *video eyes* (the electronic eyes that enable a robot to perform delicate tasks, such as picking peaches, in varying degrees of light and shade) and *cowbot* (a robot capable of feeding a dairy herd, attaching and detaching milking equipment, and cleaning the equipment).

chicken run *noun*, emigration of large numbers of people from a country or an area that is undergoing violent political, especially racial, upheaval: "In spite of the attempts of the South African government to minimize what has become known as the *chicken run*, the exodus of English-speaking South Africans is clearly accelerating" (*Maclean's*).

BACKGROUND: In one of the small ironies of history, *chicken run* once referred to the flight of white refugees into South Africa

Here are a few of the words being tracked by the editors of The American Heritage Dictionary, published by Houghton Mifflin. A new word that exhibits sustained use over time may eventually make its way into the dictionary.

from Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Our earliest citation for the term is dated April 27, 1978: "A growing number of white farmers are said to be abandoning their homesteads and taking the *chicken run* to South Africa" (*Washington Post*). The term is a compound probably formed from the adjective *chicken*, meaning "cowardly," and the noun *run*, meaning "a route or course traveled."

coyote *noun*, a roving firefighter who is dispatched, often for days at a time, to remote, usually very serious, forest fires: "Like the scraggly creature that lives a bare subsistence in the wild, *coyote* crews are left in the fire zone to sleep when they can and continue to fight the fire" (*Boston Globe*).

— *verb*, to dispatch (firefighters) to battle remote blazes: "'You can't *coyote* people too many shifts,' said Leland Singer, a fire information officer" (*Boston Globe*).

BACKGROUND: This new meaning of the noun *coyote* and the new verb form have appeared in our general sources in the past year. The first citation illustrates the extension in meaning of the noun from the zoological to the human. The development of the verb from the noun is an example of the linguistic process called functional shift. The verb *coyote*

joins a menagerie of other such verbs formed from pre-existing nouns, of which these are but a few examples: *buffalo*, *bug*, *bull*, *cat*, *dog*, *fish*, *fox*, *goose*, *horse*, *rat*, *snake*, *squirrel*, and *wolf*.

graze *verb*, 1. to eat various appetizers (e.g., guacamole, goat cheese marinated with herbs and oil, sushi and sashimi, crudités, and Korean short ribs of beef) as a full meal: "These days, a whole meal often consists of a series of little dishes brought to the table, one or two at a time, for everyone to share. Called *grazing*, or 'modular eating,' this new trend is a far cry from having one's own slab of meat, some vegetables and a fork and a knife in each fist to fend off stray intruders" (*The New York Times Magazine*). 2. to allow a child to open packages in a supermarket for food samples and then return the packages to the shelf: "I first read about *grazing* in a magazine article lamenting the decline in public morality. *Grazing* . . . is what supermarket managers call the behavior of certain mothers with small children who frequent their stores. As the mother herds the children along, she stops long enough to open a box of cereal or crackers, and sneak the kids a quick 'wad.' Then she replaces the box on the shelf before moving on" (*US Air*).

BACKGROUND: The verb *graze*

ordinarily brings to mind hay silage, rumination, cuds, at perhaps compartmented stomachs, but not trendy restaurants, the decline of parental morality, or even grubby little hands. Nevertheless, the word is developing two new senses: the first one having rapidly gained widespread currency and the second still restricted primarily to the jargon of the grocery business.

urgicenter *noun*, a for-profit medical clinic, typically in a business district or shopping mall, that offers treatment without appointments or referrals for relatively minor medical complaints such as flu, sprains, but that does not provide the ongoing, comprehensive, specialized care for severely ill patients that hospitals do: "The chains are buying into another phenomenon: the *urgicenters* . . . that have sprung up in business districts and shopping centers. There are 2,500 such mini-clinics . . . today, 1,400 more than there were a year ago" (*The Washington Post*).

BACKGROUND: The word *urgicenter* is formed by joining the element *urg-* (as in *urgent*) and the noun *center* with the connective *-i-*. *Urgicenter*, for which we have printed citations dating back to a 1984 reference in *U.S. News & World Report* synonymous with a slightly older term, *doc-in-a-box*, which we have printed evidence going back to a 1983 article in *Fortune*. Other synonyms include *immediate-care facility*, *surgicenter*, and the irreverent *McDoctor*.

